PRESS CONFERENCES
of
THE PRESIDENT

1942 -- January 1 to June 30

J. Romagna (PC's 796 to 833)
Official Reporter

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #796
Executive Office of the President
January 2, 1942 -- 11.00 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The Attorney General and I got up a statement that is intended to correct the misapprehension of a great many people in the country in regard to the employment of aliens. I think you will regard it necessary that this be spread as widely as possible throughout the country, because there are a great many injustices that are being committed at the present time. I might as well read it to you. Steve can give it to you afterwards.

(reading): "I am deeply concerned over the increasing number of reports of employers discharging workers who happen to be aliens or even foreign-born citizens. This is a very serious matter. It is one thing to safeguard American industry, and particularly defense industry, against sabotage; but it is very much another to throw out of work honest and loyal people who, except for the accident of birth, are sincerely patriotic.

"Such a policy is as stupid as it is unjust, and on both counts it plays into the hands of the enemies of American democracy. By discharging loyal, efficient workers simply because they were born abroad or because they have 'foreign-sounding' names or by refusing to employ such men and women, employers are engendering the very distrust and disunity on which our enemies are counting to defeat us.

"Remember the Nazi technique: 'Pit race against race, religion against religion, prejudice against prejudice. Divide and conquer!'

"We must not let that happen here. We must not forget what we are defending: liberty, decency, justice. We cannot afford the economic waste of services of all loyal and patriotic citizens and non-citizens in defending our land and our liberties.

"I urge all private employers to adopt a sane policy regarding aliens and foreign-born citizens, and to remember that the sons of the 'foreigners' they discharged may be among those who fought and are fighting so valiantly at Pearl Harbor or in the Philippines.

> "There is no law providing against employment of aliens except in special defense work of a secret nature, and even in such work the employer may hire an alien with the permission of the Army or Navy, depending on the contract."

I think it is pretty important to get that out, because there are a great many people in this country that are discharging people because they have a foreign name.

And this is -- what I am going to say is off the record. It is literally true there would be no Notre Dame football team ----. (laughter) You see the point? (more laughter)

I don't think I have got anything else.

Q You seem to be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) There is going to be an announcement from the White House this afternoon sometime -- in time for the late editions of the afternoon papers, so stick around.

Q You seem to be having an alien out here in the backyard with Fala this morning, Mr. President? (referring to James Roosevelt's dachshund)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) The scottie.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) He was born in this country. It's all right. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, the motor car and truck situation which arose last night suddenly ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- creates a problem in employment. Does it? Have you that in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: A temporary problem in employment.

MR. GODWIN: Can you make any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) No. I spoke about that the other day, you know.

MR. GODWIN: I know it.

THE PRESIDENT: People will be laid off. Incidentally, the -- I have had quite a number of reports from the leaders in labor organizations in automobile plants, and they are just about 100% in their understanding of the matter, and say that they entirely approve of retooling, and that their people -- their members -- are willing to be out of work for a little while, if it will aid in the general defense program; it being of course understood that hardship will be taken care of in the meantime, and that they will return to their jobs just as soon as the new tooling comes in.

Q Mr. President, will you have your Budget conference this year?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes. I think so.

Q (interposing) Would the date be set for that?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What do we call it, the Seminar?

Q The Seminar, Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you the date. I think it will be either on Tuesday or ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Wednesday.

MR. GODWIN: Pardon me. May I continue that question? I had an idea that that -- that this crackdown might cause a six months complete ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh no.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- out of work, so that many people think that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh no. I would say -- at a guess -- an average of two months.

Q Mr. President, it is reported from London and from Australia that you are about to sign some kind of a pact here, regarding the Pacific, similar to the agreement you entered into with Churchill in the Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: What kind of a pact?

Q A pact extending the principles of the Atlantic Charter to the Pacific, and bringing in the nations of the Pacific which are fighting with us.

THE PRESIDENT: The Atlantic Charter didn't refer only to the Atlantic. It referred to the whole world. It happened to be made on the Atlantic Ocean. That is why it was called the Atlantic Charter.

Q Is there some plan, Mr. President, to bring in the nations of the Pacific into that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not on that end at all.

Q Mr. President, the Australian Prime Minister specifically announces this morning that he cabled consent of his government to Mr. Churchill here for a Pacific agreement which Australian reports said have been evolved out of your conferences here.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Nothing relating only to the Pacific.

Q It is reported this morning that Admiral King is going to head a joint British-American Fleet.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I saw that ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I won't even -- I won't even mention the names of the papers that carried that report. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there is also a report from Canberra that General Wavell will be named, or has been named, Commander of the Alloyed --- Allied forces in the Pacific. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) How about that?

THE PRESIDENT: "Alloyed" isn't a bad name at all. It isn't a bad term at all. It gives me thoughts. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, you might end a lot of speculation by releasing this announcement earlier than this afternoon. (loud laughter) It would help the afternoon papers, too. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope that we will be able to get it out in time for the last editions.

Q Mr. President, has any new thought been given to moving airplane plants back from the Pacific coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes. Yes.

Q Is that going to be done in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: It is being studied.

MR. GODWIN: This Joe Stalin story is up again, that you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I saw that.

MR. GODWIN: Have you anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it until I read about it.

MR. GODWIN: Came from Stockholm, today, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Probably was Stockholm.

Q Mr. President, would the removal of airplane plants to the interior also apply to the plants that are located on the Atlantic Seaboard ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Might.

Q (continuing) --- engine plants?

THE PRESIDENT: Might. And of course, we people in this country, we have to realize that we have to learn a great deal from experience. It is not just taking the entire plant and moving it from one place to another. The process is a very different one. Oh, let me take -- what will I call it? -- an average for a big plant -- it might mean that certain divisions of the plant could be moved back at a moment's notice into a good many different locations, and have possibly the original plant, the assembly plant -- and perhaps another place for an assembly plant. It means the splitting up of the work so that no -- no one raid would destroy the entire operation. One raid might destroy a portion of the operation. It is a sub-division question of distribution.

Q Well, it might also amount to duplication of some facilities?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, does this apply only to airplane plants?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no.

MISS MAY CRAIG: All kinds?

THE PRESIDENT: Lots of others. Even Portland, Maine.

Q Mr. President, are you going to read your Annual Message as usual this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

Q Will that be Monday or Tuesday?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't thought. I have it to take up this afternoon.

Q Have you had any reports on what progress, if any, has been made in putting in the three shifts, seven days a week?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Three shifts.

Q Three shift -- seven day week?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't. I am asking for it. I will probably get it over the week end.

Q Isn't that the quickest way that we could expand production at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that you can say that as an over-all, general answer. In some cases Yes; in other cases No. Of course, some plants have been running two shifts, some have been running three shifts. Just for example, in one type of plant it is better to run it to two shifts than three, you get more actual production; and other plants it is better to run three shifts. It depends on the individual plant. And we are increasing just as fast as we can the total number of men employed, which is probably the best way of figuring out the general proposition, and then determining which is the best method of using -- in that hiring of new men -- either the two-shift method, or even 2-1/2 shifts or three shifts.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN (New York Times): Mr. President, could you clear up a point for us? Yesterday "America" was sung in church ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Yesterday, I say, "America" was sung in church. And you were sitting next to Mr. Churchill. Did he sing the American or British words? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Honestly, Kluck! That doesn't sound like The New York Times at all. (more laughter)

MR. J. MINIFIE (New York Herald Tribune): Does it not, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. J. MINIFIE: Does it not, sir? (loud and prolonged laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Kluck, you have been well answered by the Tribune. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: What about this thing?

MR. D. CORNELL: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VI-PC - Page 121)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #797 -- (BUDGET SEMINAR)
Executive Office of the President
January 6, 1942 -- 3.10 P.M.

(Director of the Budget, Harold D. Smith, and John B. Blandford, Jr., Assistant Director, were present)

MR. EARLY: (to the President) Look at these financial experts, sir!

(indicating press association newsmen in the front row)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I think it's fine.

MR. J. HENRY: We are already groggy.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: A very small group. I am very glad to welcome the financial editors of the country! (laughter)

Q We will be after this.

Q We ought to be.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, very few newspapermen know the difference between a dollar and a dime, anyway. But then, on the other hand, very few Presidents do. (laughter) So we start even.

This is probably the biggest Budget in the history of any nation -- any time. I have no information about the Roman budgets. They were said to have been very high.

I suppose the best thing to do is for me to refer most of the questions to Harold Smith and Jack Blandford. I suppose we had better go through the Budget Message, and any time I come to the end of a sentence interrupt me and ask a question of somebody behind me.

(reading): "I am submitting herewith the Budget of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1943."

By the way, off the record, I don't suppose it's any news -- it may be in the future -- I have always felt uncertain as to whether to write a Message to Congress, or a speech, on New Year's. I always get mixed up -- and you do, and the public does -- between fiscal year and calendar year. I don't think the public understands the difference. You don't all understand the difference, and I don't understand the difference half the time. I make mistakes.

And I think it would be a great reform that might come out of this situation, to make the fiscal year of the United States -- and a lot of State governments, and municipal governments -- conform to the calendar year. It is a thing, of course, that will require legislation. But I talked to -- I don't think I will send any Message, or anything like that -- I have talked to some leaders about it lately, and they had all been talking in the same terms to get that change made.

(reading): "It is the budget of a nation at war in a world at war.

"In practical terms the Budget meets the challenge of the Axis powers."

I don't believe we need read this first section, because I said the same thing this morning.

(reading): "THE WAR PROGRAM

"Our present war program was preceded by a defense effort which began as we emerged from the long depression. During the past 18 months we laid the foundation for a huge armament program. At the same time industry provided ample consumers' goods for a rapidly growing number of workers. Hundreds of thousands of new homes were constructed; the production of consumers' durable goods broke all records. The industrial plant and equipment of the country were overhauled and expanded.

"Adjustment to a war program can now be made with greater speed and less hardship. The country is better stocked with durable goods. Our factories are better equipped to carry the new production load. The larger national income facilitates financing the war effort.

"There are still unused resources for agricultural and industrial production. These must be drawn into the national effort. Shortages, however, have developed in skilled labor, raw materials, machines, and shipping. Under the expanding war program, more and more productive capacity must be shifted from peacetime to wartime work.

"Last year fiscal policy was used to shift the economy into high gear. Today it is an instrument for transforming our peace economy into a war economy. This transformation must be completed with minimum friction and maximum speed. The fiscal measures which I outline in this message are essential elements in the Nation's war program.

"WAR APPROPRIATIONS

"This is a war budget. The details of a war program are, of course, in constant flux. Its magnitude and composition depend on events at the battlefronts of the world, on naval engagements at sea, and on new developments in mechanized warfare. Moreover, war plans are military secrets.

"Under these circumstances I cannot hereafter present details of future war appropriations. However, total appropriations and expenditures will be published so that the public may know the fiscal situation and the progress of the Nation's effort."

Q At that point, Mr. President, does that mean, for example, that there won't be published and made available records of Committee hearings or Committee reports? Those appropriations will provide, say, for 3 thousand airplanes, and 3 thousand tanks, etcetera? It will be a lump sum for the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: Very largely, because -- well, we all know the practical problem. So does every member of the Committee on the Hill.

Q But there will be hearings?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh Yes. Oh my, Yes. Heavens, Yes.

Q All that information made available?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt, for example, if we would ask for 3 thousand airplanes. I doubt if we would get a breakdown on the -- on the types of those planes. On one particular supplemental bill it might be a majority of pursuit planes. On another supplemental hearing it might be a majority of bombers, or something like that. Now those things are details you can't give out, and that is one reason why, quite frankly, when you say 3 thousand planes it may mean an awful lot, and it may not.

I have been rather considering the idea -- so as to give the people -- give people a chance to see whether the step-up is a constant step-up month by month -- of using, instead of -- instead of the terms of planes, or ships, which may be large or small, of using "manhours." In other words, if we see that this country is every week increasing the manhours, we know we are going places. But it is a fantastic term when you talk of manhours. I don't get it. I still don't understand what 10 million manhours means. And I am open to suggestions.

There is an old -- there is an old crossword puzzle word called an "erg," -- an E-R-G -- a unit of work. I don't know what an erg is. If somebody could get that across in simpler terms than manhours, it would be an awfully good thing. It is something that we need to have invented. We might all be thinking about it. I think I might almost offer a prize.

Lloyd George, in '18, when I went to the other side, said, "You Americans have got inventive genius. Invent me a term to take the place of the word 'cooperation.'" Nobody has done it yet. It is an amazing thing. It is a horrible word, but we haven't got a substitute yet.

MR. EARLY: Mr. President, Pete Brandt came through this morning with a suggestion. You might call upon him to give it to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Go on, Pete.

MR. P. BRANDT: Use, say, 60 thousand manhours.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) That's a thousand men working 60 hours a week.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) I don't know how you can do that with one million manhours. If you take the 60 thousand hours to make a plane, that's a thousand men working for a week, or sixty hours a week. You can understand it better. You can visualize it.

THE PRESIDENT: If we would get down to small figures.

MR. P. BRANDT: I mean -- if you say a bomber takes 60 thousand manhours, well then you can visualize a thousand men working for 60 hours.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Why not number of planes?

Q And types?

Q You can use dollars.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Not on types.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the trouble. It brings you down to type, it brings you down to bombers. If we could get -- I am just thinking out loud -- if we could get something on the scale of 100, that would mean that -- well, let us put it this way -- I am just thinking out loud again -- suppose we figure 100 or 110 as the maximum effort in this country, as shown by the national income. All right. We hope to get up to 56 -- I mentioned the word this morning -- 56 billions, which is a little over half of the total income of the country. And in general terms it represents also 56% of the effort of the country. That is the thing we are shooting at.

Well, now, what are we at today? We are up to 27 -- something like that -- 29. Now would it be -- don't write any stories on this, we are just looking for an idea -- would it be possible to use -- get the Director of the Budget to give us something showing what we are at now, figure 27 -- 29 -- whatever it is? Then month by month watch us go up, we hope, toward the 56 that everybody has got in mind.

Q (interposing) Why wouldn't it be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is the effort of every man, woman and child -- farmer -- everything else -- being represented by a figure, let us say, of 110. Now that might work. Will you figure on that and see if something like that wouldn't work? As of the first part of the month, where are we at now on manhours, translated into this new objective? Well, this past month we rose from 29 to 31. It will give us a -- a yardstick.

Q Would it be possible, Mr. President, to take the war production as of the date of Pearl Harbor as index number one?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q (continuing) And then go up from there?

THE PRESIDENT: Go up from there. What do you think, Harold, is something like that possible?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Yes. Use 100 as of some date. Then you have got a term that people can understand.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sure.

Q Well, Mr. President, how does that get around this lag in checks credited to the Treasury, and that sort of thing? Your activity is considerably ahead of your bookkeeping.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nor are we -- our bookkeeping keeps pace with it. The actual banks ---

Q (interposing) That is what I had in mind.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- are far better.

Q That is what I had in mind.

THE PRESIDENT: That is mere expenditure.

Q So that you will talk in terms of actual activity?

THE PRESIDENT: Actual activity instead of money going out in Treasury checks.

Q Would there be any complications, Mr. President, if we happened to go down somewhat instead of going up?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we need worry about that. I think we are all right on it.

Q (interposing) Could it be translated ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) If we are not, you can guess it by the absence of an answer, when you ask the question. (laughter)

Q It might be translated, Mr. President, into units of weapons for a man. One man to a rifle. Four men to an airplane. Two men to a tank. Units of striking power.

THE PRESIDENT: Little pictures? Well, I don't know.

Q I can see these little spear-men running up and down hill.

THE PRESIDENT: It's all right for the weeklies.

(reading): "The defense program, including appropriations, contract authorizations, recommendations, and commitments of Government corporations, was 29 billion dollars on January 3, 1941. During the last 12 months 46 billion dollars have been added to the program. Of this total of 75 billion dollars there remains 24 billion dollars for future obligation.

"In this Budget I make an initial request for a war appropriation of 13.6 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943."

That illustrates that thing exactly.

Q Mr. President, that would give you 24 billion plus 13.6, or a total of 37 billion, six hundred million?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q 24 billion.

THE PRESIDENT: To obligate immediately.

Q To obligate immediately, that's right.

THE PRESIDENT: But there might be another supplemental the end of January. That's right.

Q Mr. President, does that 37.6 contemplate your 5 billion dollar figure that you mention a little later -- this 5 billion a month in effect in the next paragraph? I mean does this initial 13.6 that you mention here provide for enough funds to reach that level of production during the year?

THE PRESIDENT: By the end of the year?

Q By the end of the year.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that right? (turning to Harold Smith)

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Yes, the 13.6 is really an extension of the present regular and supplementary appropriations for the War and Navy Departments, which is based on so many men, and so forth and so on, you see.

Q Mr. President, is that 13.6 large amount already tied up by the previous contract authorizations that have been voted by Congress? Is that entirely free and unencumbered?

THE PRESIDENT: No. As Harold says, most of this is for the additional men, and the things that go with them -- uniforms, etcetera, that are coming in at the present time. Very largely personnel, isn't it?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: This is an extension. In other words, that begins the end of this fiscal year on what we have now in the way of supplements and appropriations for the Army and Navy.

Q What I was trying to get at, sir, is whether all these figures in the Budget -- including the 13.6 and the deficit figure, etcetera -- are based on this premise, and include this, or whether any additional money that comes along later will go over and above these figures?

THE PRESIDENT: You will find that is all in the Summary Table at the end of the Message itself. The General Budget Summary.

Q Well, contracts are still to be let for this 24 billion?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (continuing) You will find that on that General Budget page (xxi) -- about -- under Expenditures -- number Four -- 52 billion, 786 -- included in there.

MR. BLANDFORD: Mr. President, there is a Table on page A-84, which summarizes the whole national defense picture.

THE PRESIDENT: What is that page again?

MR. BLANDFORD: A-84. In the Appropriations column -- '43 -- to the extreme left.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, down at the bottom, Yes. 13.6.

MR. BLANDFORD: The Supplemental item is an estimate of appropriations to be submitted. On the other hand, we have included on the Expenditure side -- Estimated '43, fourth column over -- 17 billion dollars worth of expenditures by ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Marked Supplemental Items?

MR. BLANDFORD: (continuing) --- Marked Supplemental Items, that is, Estimate of Expenditures. We have arrived at that total of 52.7 as the expenditures for national defense, to which must be added about 3 billion for corporation expenditures to get the total of 56.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: (interjecting) Yes, that comes out there next.

MR. BLANDFORD: (continuing) The only question is the exact amount of the supplemental appropriations. We have the expenditure side.

Q What is it that must be added?

MR. BLANDFORD: Approximately 3 billion for corporate expenditures -- R.F.C. and its various subsidiaries that are working in the national defense picture.

Q May I ask a question? On Table A-84 you have Appropriations showing Navy Department 5 billion 9, and for the War Department 6.3. And you have Expenditures for the same year shown as 6.8 for the Navy, and 18.6 for the War Department. In other words, in one place you have Appropriations of about 12 billion, roughly, and Expenditures of about 25 billion. Now, does that mean that these -- this Appropriation of 12 billion under these two items, plus appropriations already made by Congress, produce that 25 billion in Expenditures? Is that right?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: That is right.

MR. BLANDFORD: Plus appropriations to be submitted in January and subsequently. Supplemental appropriations ---

Q (interposing) Supplemental items are down here under 17.

MR. BLANDFORD: (continuing) --- And you notice that no amount is estimated opposite the Appropriation for '43.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: (interjecting) Appropriation for that '43.

MR. BLANDFORD: (continuing) We have estimated the expenditures possible under our 56% -- 50% of our national income -- but we have not yet estimated the total amount of the Supplementals to carry out -- which may carry through another fiscal year -- such authorizations as ship construction.

Q Thank you very much.

MR. BLANDFORD: You have got a complete picture of the Expenditures, but the Supplemental figure is to be supplied later.

Q Where does this 13 billion figure -- what does that take in if the Supplemental items are not estimated?

MR. BLANDFORD: Well, this would total all of the figures above. 5.9 for Navy, and 6.3 for War, and the others that are listed below.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let's go on to page 7.

(reading): "WAR EXPENDITURES

"Total war expenditures are now running at a rate of 2 billion dollars a month and may surpass 5 billion dollars a month during the fiscal year 1943. As against probable budgetary war expenditures of 24 billion dollars for the current fiscal year, our present objective calls for war expenditures of nearly 53 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943."

That gives you the figure of 56 we were talking about.

(reading): "And in addition, net outlays of Government corporations for war purposes are estimated at about 2 and 3 billion dollars for the current and the next fiscal year, respectively."

Q What was the total war expenditure in the World War, do you happen to know, Mr. President?

Q (aside) Look in the World Almanac.

Q About 21, wasn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: More than that -- 48 -- it was about 41. And then, you remember, at the end of the World War, we sold an awful lot of stuff, and cancelled contracts for a lot of stuff that hadn't been actually completed, bringing, as I remember it, the total cost of the war, after those sales had been made, to about 29 billion. That is very rough -- something like that. And then in the -- in the Coolidge, and first year of the -- of the Hoover administration, that had been cut to about 21 billion total national debt.

(reading): "These huge expenditures for ships, planes, and other war equipment will require prompt conversion of a large portion of our industrial establishment to war production. These estimates reflect our determination to devote at least one-half of our national production to the war effort.

> "The agencies responsible for the administration of this vast program must make certain that every dollar is speedily converted into a maximum of war effort. We are determined to hold waste to a minimum."

I don't know whether it's the appropriate place, but I see no reason why you shouldn't know the fact that during the past two weeks, in talking to these various people -- I think I mentioned it the other day -- I was a bit appalled by the fact that so much of our production was still going into civilian use. We knew, for instance, last -- about September, that out of the total production of steel in the United States, only about 25% of it was going into war production.

And it was a large question, at that time, as to whether we shouldn't start new steel plants, to get more steel production. And we have started a few, but it takes a year and a half to build a steel plant before it starts turning things out.

So we adopted the only other possibility, besides adding a little to existing production. And that was to cut more deeply into civilian production. I can't give you the exact figures, but between last -- I think it was from September, when we talked about it -- the amount -- the percentage of defense steel has risen from about 25% first, to 30%, then to 35%, which still means that 65% is going into civilian use.

So when Lord Beaverbrook first got over here, I said, "What are your percentages?" "Well," he said, "our percentages are very nearly turned around. 75% of all the steel made in England is going into war use, and 25% to civilian use."

Now this program will not get us as high as 75% of steel production for war use, but it will be a whole lot higher than the present 35%. My own estimate is that it will run probably as high as 55%, or even

60%, meaning that the civilian use of steel has got to be cut a lot more than it has been cut already.

And the other thing I think I can bring out is that in making up these total estimates, of course I sent for the Budget people who were responsible. For example, I sent for the Maritime Commission, and I pointed out to them that one of the really vital things we have got to get is more tonnage, and while on the relative sinkings and buildings at the present time we are holding even, we have got to make substantial gains of building over losses.

And I said to them, "What are you making now?" "Well, we are making nearly 6 million tons this year." I said, "What can you step it up to?" "Well, " they said, "We can step -- step it up another million tons." I said, "Not enough. Go back and sharpen your pencils." That is just illustrative of the method. So they went back and sharpened their pencils, and they came back, and they said, "It will hurt terribly, but we believe that if we are told to we can turn out 8 million tons of shipping this year." I said, "Now you're talking." And I said, "All right now, for '43 what can you do? Can you turn out 2 million more tons, to a total of 10 million tons of shipping?" And they scratched their heads, and came back and said, "Aye, aye, sir, we will do it." That's just an illustration.

Then it came to planes, tanks, anti-aircraft guns. And I have been at them for two weeks, sometimes telling them to go back and sharpen their pencils.

The other day I had a final conference with Knudsen and Nelson, and I gave them what I would like to see done -- I knew it would be awful hard work for them -- and outlined the 60 thousand planes this year, of which 45 thousand would be combat planes. And I nearly took their breath away. "Can you make the 125 thousand planes next year, of which 100 thousand would be combat planes?" And they talked it over a while, and finally they came back -- to give me the green light when I go up to Congress -- and again they said, "Aye, aye, sir. We will do it, sir."

Now that has been the result of the last two weeks, and it is a very magnificent thing that they are doing, because they are accepting probably the most difficult production job in all history. And it will put us, if we get them -- I think we will -- it will put us in the position to win the war.

> (reading):"THE CIVIL FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT
>
> "In a true sense, there are no longer nondefense expenditures. It is a part of our war effort to maintain civilian services which are essential to the basic needs of human life. In the same way it is necessary in wartime to conserve our natural resources and keep in repair our national plant. We cannot afford waste or destruction, for we must continue to think of the good of future generations of Americans."

And then I have picked all the essentials out of here, because they are what we need.

> (reading): "For example, we must maintain fire protection in our forests; and we must maintain control over destructive floods."

I don't want to have all our woods, etcetera, burn up. I don't want to have any, if we can help it, any recurrence of that Ohio flood that slowed up production terribly. As it did, it swept away whole factories.

> (reading): "In the preparation of the present Budget, expenditures not directly related to the war have been reduced to a minimum or reoriented to the war program.

> "We all know that the war will bring hardships and require adjustment. Assisting those who suffer in the process of transformation and taxing those who benefit from the war are integral parts of our national program.
>
> "It is estimated that expenditures for the major Federal assistance programs -- farm aid, work relief, youth aid -- can be reduced by 600 million dollars from the previous to the current fiscal year, and again by 860 million dollars from the current to the next fiscal year. These programs will require 1.4 billion dollars during the fiscal year 1943, about one-half of the expenditures for these purposes during the fiscal year 1941.
>
> "Improved economic conditions during the current year have made possible the execution of economic and social programs with smaller funds than were originally estimated. By using methods of administrative budget control, 415 million dollars of appropriations for civil purposes have been placed in reserves."

Harold Smith, by picking out two million here and sticking it in the cupboard, and a few million there and sticking it in the cupboard, has accumulated 415 million dollars in the current fiscal year. And he says he is not going to let any of it get out. I am quite glad to see he has still got the bulk of it.

Q Do you have any objections to covering that into the Treasury by legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: By what?

Q Do you have any objections to covering that into the Treasury by legislation as a joint economy proposition?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is awfully far to look ahead. You can't tell what will happen. It is our best guess in January. But after all we are honestly trying to cover it into the Treasury, but there might be something we would have -- if we did cover it in by legislation and something happened -- we would have to go and get another appropriation out of Congress. It is a question of good faith. We will do the best we can.

Q What happens, sir, the end of a fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: Then it is converted automatically.

Q Automatically?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(reading): "Excluding debt charges and grants under the Social Security law, total expenditures for other than direct war purposes have been reduced by slightly more than 1 billion dollars in the next fiscal year."

We worked awful hard to get it up over a billion. I believe there are some people who say, "Let it go as high as a billion and a half." But that is primarily the decision of the Congress. If they want to stop certain functions of Government entirely, well, of course, they can do it. They are the -- they keep the purse strings.

(reading): "AGRICULTURAL AID. -- I propose to include contract authorizations in the Budget to assure the farmer a parity return on his 1942 crop, largely payable in the fiscal year 1944. I do not suggest a definite appropriation at this time because developments of farm income and farm prices are too uncertain. Agricultural incomes and prices have increased and we hope to limit the price rise of the products actually bought by the farmer. But if price developments should turn against the farmer, an appropriation will be needed to carry out the parity objective of the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

"The remaining expenditures for the agricultural program are being brought into accord with the war effort. Food is an essential war material. I propose to continue the soil conservation and use program on a moderately reduced scale. Acreage control by cooperative efforts of farmer and Government was inaugurated in a period of over-production in almost all lines of farming. Then its major objective was the curtailment of production to halt a catastrophic decline in farm prices. At present, although there is still excess production in some types of farming, serious shortages prevail in other types. The present program is designed to facilitate a balanced increase in production and to aid in controlling prices.

"WORK PROJECTS. -- The average number of W.P.A. workers was two million in the fiscal year 1940, the year before the defense program started; the average has been cut to one million this year. With increasing employment a further considerable reduction will be possible. I believe it will be necessary to make some provision for work relief during the next year. I estimate tentatively that 465 million dollars will be needed for W.P.A., but I shall submit a specific request later in the year. Workers

> of certain types and in certain regions of the country probably will not all be absorbed by war industries."

You know the human side of that. All you have to do is go to your own home town, where you meet friends and where you know everybody and find a certain type of person who couldn't possibly be useful on war work, and who probably, as long as he lives, will be a charge on the -- on the Home Relief, or on W.P.A. I have quite a number of people in mind.

> (reading): "It is better to provide useful work for the unemployed on public projects than to lose their productive power through idleness. Wherever feasible they will be employed on war projects.
>
> "Material shortages are creating the problem of 'priority unemployment.' I hope the workers affected will be reemployed by expanding war industries before their unemployment compensation ceases. Some of the workers affected will not, however, be eligible for such compensation and may be in need of assistance.
>
> "Rather than rely on relief a determined effort should be made to speed up reemployment in defense plants. I have, therefore, instructed the Office of Production Management to join the procurement agencies in an effort to place contracts with those industries forced to cut their peacetime production. The ingenuity of American management has already adapted some industries to war production. Standardization and substitution are doing their part in maintaining production. Ever-increasing use of subcontracts, pooling of industrial resources, and wider distribution of contracts are of paramount importance for making the fullest use of our resources. The newly nationalized Employment Service will greatly help unemployed workers in obtaining employment."

Right in there -- neither here nor there -- but it is one of those specific cases that sometimes crop up. It's a good illustration.

I was home -- oh -- about four months ago, and a fellow named -- well, never mind the name -- from Poughkeepsie came to see me. He, and his father, and grandfather, ran a sash and blind works -- made window sashes and blinds. The firm is a little over a hundred years old. And he came to me, and he said, "I am all out of orders. There is no more private building in Dutchess County. What will I do? We have got 30 first-class carpenters and cabinet makers that have been with me for years and years." "Well," I said, "can't you do some war work?" He said, "I don't know." "Are they ordering any wood cabinet work for this war?" "I don't think so. We don't do steel."

I brought him down here to Odlum's office and explained the situation. And I got busy on this thing. I said, -- when I was getting my nose done -- to Ross McIntire, "You are just a little tiny cog in the Navy Department, are you still buying steel medicine cabinets to put up on the wall?"

And he said, "Yes."

"Couldn't you use a wooden medicine cabinet?"

He said, "Sure."

"Are you still buying steel bookcases, and steel desks, for your hospitals?"

He said, "Yes."

"Couldn't you use wooden ones just as well?"

"Sure."

Well, that's one -- just one illustration.

Then I sent for the Maritime Commission. I said, "On your ships, do you, in the Officers' quarters or the Mess's or the First Mate's, use -- don't you have a certain amount of wooden wainscoting?"

They said, "Yes."

"And where are you getting it?"

"I don't know."

The net result was that this man in Poughkeepsie came down here, and he was handed a list of wooden cabinet work that could be used for the

Government -- substitutes mostly. And he was asked, "Aren't there any other woodworking companies like yours in Hudson Valley that are going out of business for lack of work?"

And he said, "Yes. One in Newburgh, one in Kingston, one in Hudson, and I think one in Peekskill that I know of. They are all in the same fix I am in."

So they said to him, "All right. How much can the five companies in the Hudson River Valley take?" Just to employ the actual men now in their employ -- in Poughkeepsie there were 30 carpenters.

And he went back there, and they have got enough Government orders to keep 150 men steadily at work for at least a year on building wooden substitutes for the Government. And then, the 150 skilled workers that are employed by the use of a little ingenuity.

Now that sort of thing we are beginning to get into our stride, but it means, as you know, -- it means going and searching out the places where that kind of a solution of the problem is needed. And, well, we are doing it as fast as we can.

(reading): "AIDS TO YOUTH. -- Under war conditions there is need and opportunity for youth to serve in many ways. It is therefore possible to make a considerable reduction in the programs of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration. The youth, too, will be aided by the United States Employment Service in finding employment opportunities."

I don't know anything about it yet.

Q Mr. President, at that point, that 100 million dollars is contained in the Budget, however?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is in. And I am expressing the pious hope it won't all have to be used.

(reading): "Although I am estimating 100 million dollars for these two agencies, excluding 50 million dollars for defense training, it is probable that the total amount will not be needed. I am postponing until next spring presentation to the Congress of specific recommendations as to youth aid.

"PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM. -- The public works program is being fully adjusted to the war effort. The general program of 578 million dollars includes those projects necessary for increasing production of hydroelectric power, for flood control, and for river and harbor work related to military needs. Federal aid for highways will be expended only for construction essential for strategic purposes. Other highway projects will be deferred until the post-war period. For all other Federal construction I am restricting expenditures to those active projects which cannot be discontinued without endangering the structural work now in progress."

Q Mr. President, in connection with the hydroelectric -- is there in the Budget -- have you included an estimate for the first year's work on the Saint Lawrence power?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we do. No. Off -- I think -- I don't think we included it for any of the essential defense projects that are in the bill that is now up in the House.

Q In '43, on the highways, there will be no lump sum allocations for the States other than for actual defense?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not.

Q That's fine.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little on Congress. It is going to be awfully hard for the Congress to cut things like State highways.

Q In that connection, have you mentioned the possibility of using S.P.A.B. allocations to prevent the use of strategic materials among ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In among what?

Q The possibility of using S.P.A.B. authority to prevent the use of strategic materials in public construction, even though the money has been appropriated? Is it all right talking about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think that is part of it. It all fits in on the allocation thing. And of course, as you know, we are being sometimes a little bit high-handed. Some fellow has a beautiful idea for putting up a better apartment house, and so forth and so on. He has a perfectly legal right to do it. But it does not fit in, so somehow or other the materials don't get to him.

Q Couldn't the same thing be done when it comes down to improving towns, as regards certain appropriations? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. That is -- what's the word? -- clubbing?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: As a big stick, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: As a big stick. We are not going to have steel, and build reinforced concrete roads, so that Congress might very well appropriate the roads, but they might not be built for the lack of steel.

THE PRESIDENT: And remember that came from the Director of the Budget! (laughter)

> Page Ten. (reading): "CIVIL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES. -- The work of the civil departments and agencies is undergoing thorough reorientation. Established agencies will be used to the greatest possible extent for defense services. Many agencies have already made such readjustment. All civil activities of the Government are being focussed on the war program."

Q Mr. President, in that connection -- from people like us who don't know anything about it -- I have heard it from friends who ask -- as long as we are spending all this money for war, why do we need all these bureaus in the Commerce Department and the Agriculture Department, and so forth? Does this paragraph mean that?

THE PRESIDENT: It means that -- the answer is that it is awfully easy to say a broad, general thing like that, but when you come down to actual cases -- well, for instance, we know that the Department of Agriculture has all kinds of bureaus in it. The Bureau of Animal Inspection -- My Lord, can't we let that go until the end of the war? When you come down to it, ought we to let that stop during the period of the war? Oughtn't we to protect the health of the people? Oughtn't we to see to it? Look at the bureaus -- the Bureau to Eliminate Ticks on Cattle, to eliminate the Boll Weevil, to eliminate the Peach Moth, and so forth and so on.

The answer is that we are fighting nature all the time along those lines. The pine blister rust -- they are fighting nature, in order to keep from getting overwhelmed by nature.

And if we once let up on the fight, it means that the work will be just twice as hard. There will be an awful lot of ultimate damage caused by nature -- the pests of nature. We are cutting them. We are cutting all those bureaus, but we are still keeping the service going on.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Mr. President, may I implement that just a little bit with a specific illustration in connection with economic defense. For example, arrangement has been made for a large part of the staff of the Tariff Commission to be working on the program on economic defense. A considerable part of the staff of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce -- of the Commerce Department -- also works in that field. And you get the situation where the Federal Power Commission, for example, -- while that has been modified since then -- the Federal Power Commission has been devoting hours of its time to -- to ferreting out bottlenecks, and planning power programs and inter-connections, etc. A great deal, much more than anyone thinks -- until you get down to these departments and bureaus, one after the other -- is being orientated to the war effort.

Q Mr. President, before you leave this section dealing with reductions, what happens to the Food Stamp program?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it for six months. What's happened to the Food Stamp program? (turning around)

Q There is elimination of -- of an appropriation for 25 million dollars for the disposal of surplus commodities. I wondered how that affects the Food Stamp program?

THE PRESIDENT: You have got me cold on that. I don't know.

MR. BLANDFORD: Mr. President, that particular activity comes under the export-domestic consumption. And while in '42 we had a total appropriation of 222 million dollars, we are including 132 million dollars in '43, which is the 30% of customs not supplemented by any additional appropriation.

THE PRESIDENT: Why as much as that, Jack?

MR. BLANDFORD: Well, curiously, our customs receipts, as I recall it, have gone up. In any event, with the 30%, sir, you do get corresponding reductions in all of the programs financed out of that appropriation, which includes the Food Stamp Plan, the Cotton Stamp program, etcetera. They are all in on that 132 million dollars, and items for reduction. We have, I think, a figure of 26 million dollars as the reduction in the Food Stamp Plan.

Q 26, did you say?

MR. BLANDFORD: 26.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, somebody will have to justify it before Congress. I won't attempt to. (laughter) I should think the reduction should be larger, but it's all right.

> (reading): "FEDERAL GRANTS AND DEBT SERVICE. -- A few categories of civil expenditures show an increase. Under existing legislation Federal grants to match the appropriations for public assistance made by the individual States will increase by 73 million dollars."

That is in accordance with existing law, and of course the bulk of it is on -- it might be called health items. There is more money for the blind, there is more money for widows, and orphans, all in accordance with the existing law that I have to follow in this Budget.

Q Is that the matching, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is the matching.

Q Matching provision of Social Security.

> (reading): "I favor an amendment to the Social Security Act which would modify matching grants to accord with the needs of the various States. Such legislation would probably not affect expenditures substantially during the next fiscal year."

Well, you know what we have been trying to do on that. It is going to be a hard thing to get through a -- oh, what? -- a State like Georgia, which hasn't got the taxable values in the State. And therefore, when they come to a matching program with the Federal Government, their total is very, very low, if judged on a per capita basis. That does not take care of their sick, and blind, and unemployed, and relief people, and so forth and so on, because the State hasn't got the taxable value.

In a State like New York, on the other hand, they have got the taxable values. They can put up much larger funds, again on a per capita basis, than the State of Georgia.

Now the objective is that the Federal grants will be so distributed as to help the poorer States more greatly than the richer States. And that would not be left to the discretion of the State legislature -- because a lot of them might try to save money on that basis -- but would be based on some kind of an index figure, which in turn would be based on the per capita income of the individuals in all of the States. The individual -- the States that have the highest per capita income would get the least, and the States that have the lowest income would get the most. Well, that is something we are shooting for, and have been for the last year.

Q Well, Mr. President, isn't that provided in the Connally bill? I saw Senator Connally introduced a bill providing that system of matching.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Has he?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q It grades the richer States by rates, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, depending on the per capita income in each State.

Q I mean the present grades.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The present rate of ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is entirely up to -- I have to follow the present law. There is nothing I can do about it. I have to put in an estimate in accordance with what those States are putting up themselves. If they increase the amount to spend under the present law, I have got to do it too.

Q Well, Mr. President, do you think under present circumstances there is some chiseling on the part of some backward States that are trying to dump it on the Federal Government?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because we don't -- as a general rule it's on a matching basis, so if they put up less we put up less.

Q Is there any possibility some of these alleged backward States hope the Federal Government would come along and carry more of the load for them in the future?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends largely on what kind of administration they have got.

Q Do you hope to get that through this year?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you hope to get that through this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope to, Yes. Congress will be here for 359 more days.

Q Isn't this a reversal on the part of the Administration? Congressman -- Mississippi's Congressman, and several of them, tried to get this shelved in the House, and it also came up in the Senate; and in both Houses Administration leaders fought and defeated it.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know that.

Q At that time arose the question of so-called poorer States.

Q That was on Federal Education, wasn't it?

Q No, sir.

Q No, no. Connally amended some bill in the Senate a year or so ago. That was finally thrown overboard.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. That was too much "rule of thumb."

(reading): "Because of heavy Federal borrowing, interest charges are expected to increase by 139 million dollars in the current fiscal year, and by another 500 million dollars in the fiscal year 1943. Debt service is, of course, affected by war spending.

"COORDINATION OF FISCAL POLICIES

"The fiscal policy of the Federal Government, especially with respect to public works, is being reinforced by that of State and local governments. Executive committees of the Council of State Governments and the Governors' Conference have issued excellent suggestions for harmonizing various aspects of State and local fiscal policy with national objectives. These governments are readjusting many of their services so as to expedite the war program. Many are making flexible plans for the post-war readjustment and some are accumulating financial reserves for that purpose. The larger the scale of our war effort, the more important it becomes to provide a reservoir of post-war work by business and by Federal, State, and local governments.

"FINANCING THE WAR

"Determination, skill, and materiel are three great necessities for victory . Methods of financing may impair or strengthen these essentials. Sound fiscal policies are those which will help win the war. A fair distribution of the war burden is necessary for national unity. A balanced financial program will stimulate the productivity of the Nation and assure maximum output of war equipment.

"With total war expenditures, including net outlays of Government corporations, estimated at 26 billion dollars for the current fiscal year and almost 56 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943, war finance is a task of tremendous magnitude requiring a concerted program of action.

"RECEIPTS UNDER PRESENT LEGISLATION

"Total receipts from existing tax legislation will triple under the defense and war programs. They are expected to increase from 6 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1940 to 18 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943. This increase is due partly to the expansion of economic activities and partly to tax legislation enacted during the last 2 years. As we approach full use of our resources, further increases in revenue next year must come predominantly from new tax measures rather than from a greater tempo of economic activity. Taxes on incomes, estates, and corporate profits are showing the greatest increase. Yields from employment taxes are increasing half as fast; and the yields from excise taxes are increasing more slowly; customs are falling off."

Of course that is obvious.

(reading): "On the whole, our tax system has become more progressive since the defense effort started."

Then you have got a table.

Q Mr. President, on the employment taxes, does this imply a recommendation either by the Treasury or Social Security Bureau for an increase in payroll taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, employment taxes.

Q That has been suggested, but it hasn't been proposed officially?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is one of the things.

(See Table on Page XI of Budget Message appended)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us what Table would have that most graphically in dollars?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: That is -- Receipts, Schedule 1.

Q What page?

MR. BLANDFORD: Page xxii. And then there is a statement, number one, which goes over and starting new series D-4 in more detail, on page A3.

Q Thank you.

(reading): "DEFICITS UNDER PRESENT LAWS

"The estimate of deficits must be tentative and subject to later revision. The probable net outlay of the Budget and Government corporations, excluding revenues from any new taxes, will be 20.9 billion dollars for the current fiscal year, and 45.4 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943. Borrowing from trust funds will reduce the amounts which must be raised by taxation and borrowing from the public by about 2 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1942 and 2.8 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943."

Then follows a Table which I never saw before, but it's all right.

(See Table on Page XII of Budget Message appended hereto)

(reading): "In estimating expenditures and receipts, only a moderate rise in prices has been assumed. Since expenditures are affected by rising prices more rapidly than are revenues, a greater price increase would further increase the deficit."

Q Mr. President, would you have that assumption confirmed if the Congress moves pretty fast?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would you have that assumption confirmed if the Congress moves pretty fast?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. The quicker the better.

(reading): "THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL TAXES

"In view of the tremendous deficits, I reemphasize my request of last year that war expenditures be financed as far as possible by taxation. When so many Americans are contributing all their energies and even their lives to the Nation's great task, I am confident that all Americans will be proud to contribute their utmost in taxes. Until this job is done, until this war is won, we will not talk of burdens.

"I believe that 7 billion dollars in additional taxes should be collected during the fiscal year 1943. Under new legislation proposed later in this Message, social security trust funds will increase by 2 billion dollars. Thus new means of financing would provide a total of 9 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943."

It's the objective.

(reading): "Specific proposals to accomplish this end will be transmitted in the near future."

Of course I suppose the Treasury will do that.

(reading): "In this Message I shall limit my recommendations on war finance to the broad outline of a program."

Q Mr. President, may I interrupt a moment? Could you tell us how you happen to arrive at 7 billion dollars, rather than six or eight or some other figure?

THE PRESIDENT: Two ways, by asking what the maximum was that we could raise, and then asking the converse of it, "Will the country stand that amount?"

Q Mr. President, this contemplates almost a 50% payment of 56 billion dollars out of taxes then, doesn't it, or out of taxes borrowed from trust funds for the 18 billions estimated from present taxes in '43?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The 18 includes, doesn't it, Harold?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: No.

Q It says "exclusive," I think, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute. (reading): "Total receipts from existing tax legislation are expected to increase to 18 billion dollars."

Q Total 27 billion dollars?

Q Almost half of the 56 to be spent.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, on the General Budget Summary, column one, item four Roman, you have got "receipts from proposed tax legislation of 7 billion."

Q Where is that, sir?

Q Page 21.

THE PRESIDENT: Page 21 -- Roman.

Q You have 16.48 up above.

THE PRESIDENT: That is in. In other words that gives you the actual budgetary figures of 42 billion, minus receipts from proposed tax legislation, or budget deficit under proposed tax legislation, 35 billion.

Q About 23-1/2?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. 16 plus 7 equals 23-1/2.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, are the new Social Security taxes in that Table?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) 2 billion makes it 9.

Q (interposing) In that ---

MR. BLANDFORD: (interjecting) On page 12.

Q (continuing) --- Table on page 21?

MR. BLANDFORD: In that table on page 12.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Item 3.

Q Mr. President, is it correct then to say that the total amount of taxes is approximately 27 billion, as against the 17.8, plus the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) 25-1/2 isn't it?

Q (interposing) Does that 25-1/2 ---

THE PRESIDENT: (Continuing) About 25-1/2.

Q Does that 25-1/2 include deductions you are deducting from any -- deducting from the Old Age insurance, which has to be collected?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q So the actual collections from the people would be 27?

MR. BLANDFORD: 18 and 9 total collections.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: You have got Social Security taxes in there. 18 and 9 in that total, which are not applicable to the general budget but are applicable to finance.

Q It would be 25 then, without the Social Security?

MR. BLANDFORD: 1.3 plus 3.3. 3.3 would be the Social Security part of it.

Q It is 27 billion, although 3.3 is Social Security, is that right?

Q There is no telling, is there, sir, what is earmarked, what is Social Security and general taxes? It goes into the general fund, does it not?

Q It's a question of how much of it goes into ---

MR. HAROLD SMITH: (interposing) For financing, that's all.

Q Yes.

Q How much is to be collected, then, in the '43 fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: You can handle it three different ways. You can handle the 16 plus 7, or handle the 23, or you can add Social Security to make it 25, and -- what? -- 2 billion more for new Social Security -- 27.

Q 18 plus 9 then?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) As I see it, you can write the story truthfully any one of those three ways.

Q (interposing) The General Budget Summary carries the figure 52 billion 786 million. Have you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Then you add to that Jesse Jones' items for the balance of this year and next year, about another 4.

MR. BLANDFORD: 3 billion 43.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, there is this difference, isn't there, between ordinary taxation and Social Security taxes? When you get the Social Security taxes in, you still have to borrow the money? Isn't that right? Don't you have to borrow it from the Social Security?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, from Social Security, that's right.

Q So it is really borrowed tax money?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right. Instead of going to the bank or the public, you go to your own Social Security trust fund and borrow from that.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: It doesn't help the Budget, but it helps the Treasury.

THE PRESIDENT: (reading):

> "Tax programs too often follow the line of least resistance. The present task definitely requires enactment of a well-balanced program which takes account of revenue requirements, equity, and economic necessities.
>
> "There are those who suggest that the policy of progressive taxation should be abandoned for the duration of the war because these taxes do not curtail consumers' demand. The emergency does require measures of a restrictive nature which impose sacrifices on all of us. But such sacrifices are themselves the most compelling argument for making progressive taxes more effective. The anti-inflationary aspect of taxation should supplement, not supplant, its revenue and equity aspects.
>
> "PROGRESSIVE TAXES
>
> "Progressive taxes are the backbone of the Federal tax system. In recent years much progress has been made in perfecting income, estate, gift, and profit taxation but numerous loopholes still exist. Because some taxpayers use them to avoid taxes, other taxpayers must pay more. The higher the tax rates the more urgent it becomes to close the loopholes. Exemptions in estate and gift taxation should be lowered. The privileged treatment given certain types of business in corporate income taxation should be reexamined."

Q Mr. President, do you mean cooperative and mutual and such businesses --

non-profit organizations?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not non-profit organizations like churches.

Q I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: Not organizations like charities and things of that kind.

Q Could you give us a little better idea?

Q (interposing) You mean mutual life insurance companies, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: If they are truly mutual, but you know there are some of them that are called mutual that "ain't."

Q What about labor organizations, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What about labor organizations?

Q (interposing) Allowance for mining companies, iron and gas?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Some of those oil things are a scandal.

Q What about farm cooperatives?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What about farm cooperatives?

THE PRESIDENT: If they are cooperatives.

Q Did you have in mind the average annual income?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I tell you what I have in mind. I don't know whether it's this clause, or one further on. You take a corporation. Well -- what? -- don't use the name in your stories -- call it corporation "X." I am thinking of Coca Cola. Now, what is the total amount of money -- I don't happen to own any of the stock, but most people do -- what is the total amount -- not confined to any rich people -- widows and orphans -- that ever went into Coca Cola? Well, it is probably -- what? -- 10% of the capitalization of Coca Cola. Now they ploughed back profits, that is perfectly true, but nothing like to an amount equal to the total of their capitalization.

Now, how do you value Coca Cola? Do you value it on the profit they make every year? While on the original stock the payments that went in there were -- I don't know, what? -- 100% -- they are making this year the same amount that they made on the average of the past 4 years. So they escape under the present law -- very largely escape any additional taxes.

Now the question is: Should an original investor be entitled to 100% without any further penalty? There are any number of corporations of that kind. It was one of the well recognized -- it was not dishonest -- everybody did it in the Golden Age of the Twenties. And it is a question as to whether people should get 100% on their money year in and year out, or whether they should pay somewhat higher taxes on that enormous yield. And of course ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I failed, as you know, in the last tax bill to have anything done about it. I am still at it.

Q You mean a corporation, Mr. President, with a large fixed capitalization should not be penalized the same way, as far as taxes are concerned, as a company with smaller capitalization and larger earnings?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right too. Now of course there are a lot of very small companies and individual businesses today that we all feel terribly sorry for, because they have certain debts, which under the present tax law they are absolutely unable to cut down. At the present time, under the present law, they can't spend any of their money for reduction of debt, and these companies are companies of very small capitalization. It is really hardship on them.

Q You speak, Mr. President, of loopholes, here again, in the tax law.

Would that include tax laws on community property that they tried to correct last year? Would you happen to have that in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't had it in mind, but I have always thought that we should have exactly the same basis in all the States, instead of having four or five States with a separate kind of law.

Q May I interrupt, Mr. President? In that statement you mean to imply that you advocate one method of computing excess profits taxes, rather than in existing law?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Have some kind of provision that will help some of the smaller companies, providing some method by which they can pay down a little on their debts. Remember that smaller companies' debts are in most cases loans to banks -- from banks, callable at any time. Well, the bank is all right if it will renew the loan when it comes due -- short term -- one-year note -- three-year note -- they will be glad to renew the note if something has been paid down on the note towards its reduction. Whereas the larger companies, their debt is largely to their stockholders, and in very long term bonds. They are not frightfully concerned about paying down on their debt.

My family still has some bonds of the New York Central that are the direct lineal descendants of some bonds that my great-grandfather bought in 1841 to help build the railroad up the Hudson River. And we have still got them, and they have never paid off one cent of that capitalization in a hundred years, because it was the financial policies of railroads always to refund the debt, and never pay it off. Now that's an advantage that a big corporation has, but the little firm can't do that. The bank says, "No, no."

Q How would you attack that problem?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How would you attack that problem in new legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, would that apply also to business firms that have a fixed obligation that has to be paid off in installments over a period of, say, five years?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

(reading): "It seems right and just ....."

Oh, yes. This is one of my pets. (rubbing his hands)

(reading): ".....that no further tax-exempt bonds should be issued. We no longer issue United States tax-exempt bonds and it is my personal belief that the income from State, municipal, and authority bonds is taxable under the income-tax amendment to the Constitution. As a matter of equity I recommend legislation to tax all future issues of this character."

Q Mr. President, do you propose that mutual associations of Federal Security should be taxable by the States?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it goes hand in hand.

(reading): "Excessive profits undermine unity and should be recaptured."

This is my thought.

(continuing reading): "The fact that a corporation had large profits before the defense program started is no reason to exempt them now. Unreasonable profits are not necessary to obtain maximum production and economical management. Under war conditions the country cannot tolerate undue profits.

"Our tax laws contain various technical inequities and discriminations. With taxes at wartime levels, it is more urgent than ever to eliminate these defects in our tax system."

Then you come to the anti-inflationary policy.

(reading): "I stated last year in the Budget Message that extraordinary tax measures may be needed to 'aid in avoiding inflationary price rises which may occur when full capacity is approached.' The time for such measures has come. A well-balanced tax program must include measures which combat inflation. Such measures should absorb some of the additional purchasing power of consumers and some of the additional funds which accrue to business from increased consumer spending.

"A number of tax measures have been suggested for that purpose, such as income taxes collected at the source, pay-roll taxes, and excise taxes. I urge the Congress to give all these proposals careful consideration. Any tax is better than an uncontrolled price rise."

Q There, Mr. President, does that take in sales tax?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute. We haven't come to it yet.

(reading): "Taxes of an anti-inflationary character at excessive rates spell hardship in individual cases and may have undesirable economic repercussions. These can be mitigated by timely adoption of a variety of measures, each involving a moderate rate of taxation.

"Any such tax should be considered an emergency measure. It may help combat inflation; its repeal in a post-war period may help restore an increased flow of consumers' purchasing power.

"EXCISE TAXES. -- All through the years of the depression I opposed general excise and sales taxes and I am as convinced as ever that they have no permanent place in the Federal tax system. In the face of the present financial and economic situation, however, we may later be compelled to reconsider the temporary necessity of such measures.

"Selective excise taxes are frequently useful for curtailing the demand for consumers' goods, especially luxuries and semiluxuries. They should be utilized when manufacture of the products competes with the war effort."

Now don't go out and say that I am coming out for a sales tax. Oh no. I am talking about a selective excise tax, which is in a sense like the tax on your cigarettes. It is a selective excise tax. And I believe that we will have to go into that field more largely on a selective excise tax and sales tax on certain carefully selected things which now don't bear that burden.

For two reasons, the first is to raise revenue -- three reasons -- the first to raise revenue, the second is to put a governor -- a brake -- on inflation problems, and the third goes right with the --

at the end of this war -- the ability to take that brake off if we run into a period of deflation. So that -- that is perfectly clear.

Q Mr. President, is it your plan to put more taxes on things already bearing selective excise taxes, or reach out and take in new?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, new things.

Q New things?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Not higher taxes on those already having ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not necessarily. It depends entirely on the individual thing. They all have different considerations.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, you say, "we may later be compelled to reconsider the temporary necessity of such measures." Could you give a definition of the later?

THE PRESIDENT: Tomorrow. Any time.

Q Mr. President, you say you are not discussing a general sales tax, but the next to the last paragraph sounds like it is a general excise and sales tax that you are talking about?

Q (interposing) We may consider it later.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, (reading, not literally): "I am absolutely opposed to any general excise and sales tax," you see, but, (reading, not literally): "In the face of the present financial and economic system, we may later be compelled to reconsider the temporary necessity of such measures." That should be all the same paragraph. It is meant to be in the form of selective excise taxes. I don't think we ought to have a general sales tax.

Q Are you changing it to read that way?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you changing it to read that way?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but that is the amendment.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, are you considering retail excise taxes, or manufacturers taxes there -- sales taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: May, you will get into all sorts of problems. What is the cigarette tax? You pay it at retail, and the manufacturers pay it at the factory. You see what I mean? It's your pennies that actually go to the cigarette stand, and you pay the thing. But actually the stamp is put on, and the Government is paid, in the cigarette factory.

Q In Ohio the retailer pays it, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they really?

Q State only.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: State only.

Q There are reports that you might ask State governments to relinquish their source of income, such as cigarette or gas taxes, at least some of them? Are you contemplating that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Sometime some of the State departments will get their excise taxes so high that they will begin to lose the population. Some of those gasoline taxes in the South, in the past, have been way out of line. Probably now they won't be so much out of line.

> (reading): "PAY-ROLL TAXES AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM. -- I oppose the use of pay-roll taxes as a measure of war finance unless the worker is given his full money's worth in increased social security. From the inception of the social security program in 1935 it has been planned to increase the number of persons covered and to provide protection against hazards not initially included. By expanding the program now, we advance the organic development of our social security system and at the same time contribute to the anti-inflationary program.
>
> "I recommend an increase in the coverage of old-age and

survivors' insurance, addition of permanent and temporary disability payments and hospitalization payments beyond the present benefit programs, and liberalization and expansion of unemployment compensation in a uniform national system. I suggest that collection of additional contributions be started as soon as possible, to be followed 1 year later by the operation of the new benefit plans.

"Additional employer and employee contributions will cover increased disbursements over a long period of time. Increased contributions would result in reserves of several billion dollars for post-war contingencies. The present accumulation of these contributions would absorb excess purchasing power. Investment of the additional reserves in bonds of the United States Government would assist in financing the war."

That was the thing that you were talking about before. We -- the Government, in order to pay the cost of war, borrows from that fund.

Q Mr. President, at present on the Old Age tax, the employer pays one percent, and employee one percent. Is it correct that the Budget is making each one 2% instead of 1%?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't got any details.

MR. BLANDFORD: Those rates go up to 2% after January 1, 1943.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, '43. They postponed it one year, didn't they?

Q Mr. President, is any additional increase in the tax rates planned beyond that automatic increase, regarding the Social Security?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q There has been some talk about it going up to 5%.

THE PRESIDENT: Eventually, Yes.

Q I mean as an immediate anti-inflationary measure, you don't contemplate that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. I think that by next January, unless there is a change in the law -- I mean January, 1943 -- it will go up 1%. That is a half -- a half.

(reading): "The existing administrative machinery for collecting pay-roll taxes can function immediately. For this reason congressional consideration might be given to immediate enactment of this proposal, while other necessary measures are being perfected.

"I estimate that the social security trust funds would be increased through the proposed legislation by 2 billion dollars during the fiscal year 1943."

Q Mr. President, would that be purely through supplementing the act?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would that be through bringing in these additional persons, you refer to up there in the first paragraph, rather than any increase in rates beyond that 1%?

THE PRESIDENT: The increase in rates we have got provided by law already, and if you broaden the base the number of people would be that much more.

Q The increase in rates does not occur until next year?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q No increase in the meantime?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: There would be some increase, Mr. President, to bring it up to the total.

THE PRESIDENT: To the total.

MR. HAROLD SMITH: That is being held out for your approval by the Social Security Board.

THE PRESIDENT: You might anticipate the present program by a year.

Now the fiscal year situation.

(reading): "FLEXIBILITY IN THE TAX SYSTEM

"Our fiscal situation makes imperative the greatest possible flexibility in our tax system. The Congress should consider the desirability of tax legislation which makes possible quick adjustment in the timing of tax rates and collections during an emergency period."

Q Just what was that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What does that mean?

Q "Timing of tax rates and planning of collections," -- what does that mean?

THE PRESIDENT: Now that's a thing I will have to ask an expert. (turning to Mr. Harold Smith)

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Mr. President, I am not an expert, but the two things that were in mind there about these -- that is, the Congress might, we will say, devise a relatively perfect tax bill -- if there were such -- that fits the problems of the immediate needs of revenue, and so forth and so on. And then, when -- in connection with it, set a series of rates in that bill. One of them we will say would be in effect now. The Congress later, without a whole series of hearings, might by simple resolution put the next rate into effect, as the case demands. And furthermore, that is the sort of thing that is thought of in connection with this one point. The last point has to do with giving, perhaps, the Treasury some authority to move ahead collections, or adopt a monthly system of collections.

Q That means withholding payroll taxes?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: No. That is not -- that is not the thought. It is just a question of maybe paying income taxes on a monthly basis.

Q We might pay our '42 taxes, or '41, monthly instead of quarterly?

MR. HAROLD SMITH: Yes. Those two points are involved there.

THE PRESIDENT: (reading): "BORROWING AND THE MENACE OF INFLATION

> "The war program requires not only substantially increased taxes but also greatly increased borrowing. After adjusting for additional tax collections and additional accumulation in social security trust funds, borrowing from the public in the current and the next fiscal year would be nearly 19 billion dollars and

34 billion dollars, respectively. The adjustments are indicated in the preceding table.

"Much smaller deficits during the fiscal year 1941 were associated with a considerable increase in prices. Part of this increase was a recovery from depression lows. A moderate price rise, accompanied by an adjustment of wage rates, probably facilitated the increase in production and the defense effort. Another part of the price rise, however, was undesirable and must be attributed to the delays in enacting adequate measures of price control.

"With expenditures and deficits multiplied, the threat of inflation will apparently be much greater. There is, however, a significant difference between conditions as they were in the fiscal year 1941 and those prevailing under a full war program. Last year, defense expenditures so stimulated private capital outlays that intensified use of private funds and private credit added to the inflationary pressure created by public spending.

"Under a full war program, however, most of the increase in expenditures will replace private capital outlays rather than add to them. Allocations and priorities, necessitated by shortages of material, are now in operation; they curtail private outlays for consumers' durable goods, private and public construction, expansion and even replacements in nondefense plant and equipment. These drastic curtailments of nondefense expenditures add, therefore, to the private funds available for noninflationary financing of the Government deficit."

In other words, buy bonds instead of building -- redecorating your own house.

(reading): "This factor will contribute substantially to financing the tremendous war effort without disruptive price rises and without necessitating a departure from our low-interest-rate policy. The remaining inflationary pressure will be large but manageable. It will be within our power to control it if we adopt a comprehensive program of additional anti-inflationary measures.

"A COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-INFLATIONARY PROGRAM

"A grest variety of measures is necessary in order to shift labor, materials, and facilities from the production of civilian articles to the production of weapons and other war supplies. Taxes can aid in speeding these shifts by cutting nonessential civilian spending. Our resources are such that even with the projected huge war expenditures we can maintain a standard of living more than adequate to support the health and productivity of our people. But we must forego many conveniences and luxuries.

"The system of allocations -- rationing on the business level -- should be extended and made fully effective, especially with relation to inventory control.

"I do not at present propose general consumer ration cards. There are not as yet scarcities in the necessities of life which make such a step imperative. Consumers' rationing has been introduced, however, in specific commodities for which scarcities have developed. We shall profit by this experience if a more general system of rationing ever becomes necessary.

"I appeal for the voluntary cooperation of the consumer in our national effort. Restraint in consumption, especially of scarce products, may make necessary fewer compulsory measures. Hoarding should be encouraged in only one field, that of defense savings bonds. Economies in consumption and the purchase of defense savings bonds will facilitate financing war costs and the shift from a peace to a war economy.

"An integrated program, including direct price controls, a flexible tax policy, allocations, rationing, and credit controls, together with producers' and consumers' cooperation will enable us to finance the war effort without danger of inflation. This is a difficult task. But it must be done and it can be done."

Q Mr. President, there is no plan for enforced savings on this, is there?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No general plan, but there are all kinds of items that come up any old time -- like automobile tires. Well, that is enforced. We may have to do it with something else -- pigs knuckles! (laughter)

(reading): "THE INCREASE IN THE FEDERAL DEBT

"On the basis of tentative Budget estimates, including new taxes, the Federal debt will increase from 43 billion dollars in June 1940, when the defense program began, to 110 billion dollars 3 years later. This increase in Federal indebtedness covers also the future capital demands of Government corporations. About 2 billion dollars of this increase will result from the redemption of notes of Government corporations guaranteed by the Federal Government.

"These debt levels require an increase in the annual interest from 1 billion dollars in 1940 to above 2.5 billion dollars at the end of fiscal year 1943. Such an increase in interest requirements will prevent us for some time after the war from lowering taxes to the extent otherwise possible. The import of this fact will depend greatly on economic conditions in the post-war period."

Q Mr. President, one paragraph back there -- "2 billion dollars of this increase will result from the redemption of Government corporations." That is not by any chance losses of Government corporations is it, that have to be made up?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. How about that? (turning to Mr. Blandford)

MR. BLANDFORD: No, Mr. President, it is just including. It would be simpler to have single financing of the Treasury and corporate needs so the Treasury is going to take up these notes.

Q That means that some contingent liabilities will then be translated into the public debt? Is that the effect of it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. BLANDFORD: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So that we will get a better over-all picture.

> (reading): "Paying 2.5 billion dollars out of an extremely low national income would impose an excessive burden on taxpayers while the same payment out of a 100-billion-dollar national income, after reduction of armament expenditures, may still permit substantial tax reductions in the post-war period.
>
> "If we contract a heavy debt at relatively high prices and must pay service charges in a period of deflated prices, we shall be forced to impose excessive taxes. Our capacity to carry a large debt in a post-war period without undue hardship depends mainly on our ability to maintain a high level of employment and income.
>
> "I am confident that by prompt action we shall control the price development now and that we shall prevent the recurrence of a deep depression in the post-war period. There need be no fiscal barriers to our war effort and to victory."

I may say on this (the Budget Message) that there are two outstanding things that I am very, very much encouraged at, when I draw comparison with '17 and '18, and '19 and '20.

As some of you remember, we were paying -- getting out our bonds at 4-1/4% rate. Today we are getting out our bonds, and notes, and bills, at an average of about 2-1/2% for the entire national debt.

That is a very, very big saving over the conditions at that time.

Furthermore, the reason I stress price control is that -- also, as some of us remember -- the prices of certain things went clear out of line, both during the first World War and after it. 2 dollars for wheat. 33¢ -- 35¢ for cotton, and so forth and so on. Well, as a result of things getting out of line, through the failure of price control at that period, which, however -- was based, however, on things that happened before '17, the whole -- a whole lot of other things were thrown out of line, to the ruination of millions of people. Some of those agricultural prices that went up in '14 and '15 and '16, before we got into the war. Wheat got up -- I don't know, what? -- 2-1/2 dollars a bushel, and the price of any land that grew these things went up to a perfectly fantastic figure. 50-dollar land was selling at 200 dollars. And of course the financing of it had been by -- mostly by mortgage -- some kind of an obligation. And at the end of the period when, say, wheat dropped down from 2 dollars to 40 or 50 cents a bushel, that land reverted to its original value. And the fellow that had bought it lost it, and then a whole chain of things.

I remember in the 1920 campaign, when I started out West on my first trip, I realized that there was quite a lot of trouble among the cattle growers of the West. They had been encouraged to add to their herds, to get all the new calves that they possibly could. And the whole West was flooded with calves and cows.

And I knew that I would run into trouble, and the reason was that the people who had lent them the money -- the banks, which had been encouraged by the Treasury Department -- they were calling loans.

So I wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Houston, and said, "Now, what will I say in my speeches to these cattle growers?" And I got back a letter -- imagine my using it in the campaign -- saying, "Dear Mr. Secretary, tell them the truth. Tell them that they have to be the vicarious sacrifice for a restoration of the country to normal financial positions."

Well, I didn't use it. (laughter)

Now we want to avoid having cattle growers, and lots of other people, put in the same bad fix they were in at the end of the first World War. And we are thinking ahead. And I am perfectly convinced that even if the debt does go to 110 billion dollars, we will be able to pay it; partly because of the very much lowered cost of interest to the people of the country, and secondly by a scheme of taxation, a scheme of price control that will keep up the national income and enable us to reduce that debt in a relatively short time, just as we were reducing it up to -- what? -- '26 -- somewhere along there, where we rescinded a whole lot of taxes and left the country burdened with a debt of somewhere around 21 or 22 billion dollars.

Q Do you mind, sir, repeating those figures, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you mind repeating those figures which left you unworried about the size of the debt?

THE PRESIDENT: First the -- first the very much lower and more reasonable interest rates, and secondly the keeping up -- I think I said -- of the -- of the taxes and the national -- the national income. And third, through the price control method -- preventing normal values from going completely out of line.

Q This would anticipate the end of war in '43 then, with a 110-billion-dollar debt? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, what are the rules on what to say in this conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose the same old thing. No direct quotes.

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q There can be attributions?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q There can be attributions?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think so.

MR. EARLY: Not until after the Budget is released.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

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CONFIDENTIAL! To be held in STRICT CONFIDENCE and no portion, synopsis, or intimation to be published or given out until the READING of the President's Budget Message has been begun in the Senate or House of Representatives. While the Message and the Budget of the United States are dated JANUARY 5, 1942, some contingency may arise to prevent its delivery to the Houses of Congress on that date, and extreme care must therefore be exercised to avoid premature publication.
CAUTION: This Budget Message must not be confused with the President's Annual Message. A separate release is necessary.

STEPHEN EARLY,
Secretary to the President.

MESSAGE TRANSMITTING THE BUDGET FOR 1943

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1942

BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To the Congress of the United States:

I am submitting herewith the Budget of the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1943. It is the budget of a nation at war in a world at war.

In practical terms the Budget meets the challenge of the Axis powers. We must provide the funds to man and equip our fighting forces. We must provide the funds for the organization of our resources. We must provide the funds to continue our role as the Arsenal of Democracy.

Powerful enemies must be outfought and outproduced. Victory depends on the courage, skill, and devotion of the men in the American, British, Russian, Chinese, and Dutch forces, and of the others who join hands with us in the fight for freedom. But victory also depends upon efforts behind the lines—in the mines, in the shops, on the farms.

We cannot outfight our enemies unless, at the same time, we outproduce our enemies. It is not enough to turn out just a few more planes, a few more tanks, a few more guns, a few more ships, than can be turned out by our enemies. We must outproduce them overwhelmingly, so that there can be no question of our ability to provide a crushing superiority of equipment in any theater of the world war.

And we shall succeed. A system of free enterprise is more effective than an "order" of concentration camps. The struggle for liberty first made us a Nation. The vitality, strength, and adaptability of a social order built on freedom and individual responsibility will again triumph.

THE WAR PROGRAM

Our present war program was preceded by a defense effort which began as we emerged from the long depression. During the past 18 months we laid the foundation for a huge armament program. At the same time industry provided ample consumers' goods for a rapidly growing number of workers. Hundreds of thousands of new homes were constructed; the production of consumers' durable goods broke all records. The industrial plant and equipment of the country were overhauled and expanded

Adjustment to a war program can now be made with greater speed and less hardship. The country is better stocked with durable goods. Our factories are better equipped to carry the new production load. The larger national income facilitates financing the war effort.

There are still unused resources for agricultural and industrial production. These must be drawn into the national effort. Shortages, however, have developed in skilled labor, raw materials, machines, and shipping. Under the expanding war program, more and more productive capacity must be shifted from peacetime to wartime work.

Last year fiscal policy was used to shift the economy into high gear. Today it is an instrument for transforming our peace economy into a war economy. This transformation must be completed with minimum friction and maximum speed. The fiscal measures which I outline in this message are essential elements in the Nation's war program.

WAR APPROPRIATIONS

This is a war budget. The details of a war program are, of course, in constant flux. Its magnitude and composition depend on events at the battlefronts of the world, on naval engagements at sea, and on new developments in mechanized warfare. Moreover, war plans are military secrets.

Under these circumstances I cannot hereafter present details of future war appropriations. However, total appropriations and expenditures will be published so that the public may know the fiscal situation and the progress of the Nation's effort.

The defense program, including appropriations, contract authorizations, recommendations, and commitments of Government corporations, was 29 billion dollars on January 3, 1941. During the last 12 months 46 billion dollars have been added to the program. Of this total of 75 billion dollars there remains 24 billion dollars for future obligation.

In this Budget I make an initial request for a war appropriation of 13.6 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943. Large supplemental requests will be made as we move toward the maximum use of productive capacity. Nothing short of a maximum will suffice. I cannot predict ultimate costs because I cannot predict the changing fortunes of war. I can only say that we are determined to pay whatever price we must to preserve our way of life.

WAR EXPENDITURES

Total war expenditures are now running at a rate of 2 billion dollars a month and may surpass 5 billion dollars a month during the fiscal year 1943. As against probable budgetary war expenditures of 24 billion dollars for the current fiscal year, our present objective calls for war expenditures of nearly 53 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943. And in addition, net outlays of Government corporations for war purposes are estimated at about 2 and 3 billion dollars for the current and the next fiscal year, respectively.

These huge expenditures for ships, planes, and other war equipment will require prompt conversion of a large portion of our industrial establishment to war production. These estimates reflect our determination to devote at least one-half of our national production to the war effort.

The agencies responsible for the administration of this vast program must make certain that every dollar is speedily converted into a maximum of war effort. We are determined to hold waste to a minimum.

THE CIVIL FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

In a true sense, there are no longer nondefense expenditures. It is a part of our war effort to maintain civilian services which are essential to the basic needs of human life. In the same way it is necessary in wartime to conserve our natural resources and keep in repair our national plant. We cannot afford waste or destruction, for we must continue to think of the good of future generations of Americans. For example, we must maintain fire protection in our forests; and we must maintain control over destructive floods. In the preparation of the present Budget, expenditures not directly related to the war have been reduced to a minimum or reoriented to the war program.

We all know that the war will bring hardships and require adjustment. Assisting those who suffer in the process of transformation and taxing those who benefit from the war are integral parts of our national program.

It is estimated that expenditures for the major Federal assistance programs—farm aid, work relief, youth aid—can be reduced by 600 million dollars from the previous to the current fiscal year, and again by 860 million dollars from the current to the next fiscal year. These programs will require 1.4 billion dollars during the fiscal year 1943, about one-half of the expenditures for these purposes during the fiscal year 1941.

Improved economic conditions during the current year have made possible the execution of economic and social programs with smaller funds than were originally estimated. By using methods of administrative budget control, 415 million dollars of appropriations for civil purposes have been placed in reserves.

Excluding debt charges and grants under the Social Security law, total expenditures for other than direct war purposes have been reduced by slightly more than 1 billion dollars in the next fiscal year.

Agricultural aid.—I propose to include contract authorizations in the Budget to assure the farmer a parity return on his 1942 crop, largely payable in the fiscal year 1944. I do not suggest a definite appropriation at this time because developments of farm income and farm prices are too uncertain. Agricultural incomes and prices have increased and we hope to limit the price rise of the products actually bought by the farmer. But if price developments should turn against the farmer, an appropriation will be needed to carry out the parity objective of the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

The remaining expenditures for the agricultural program are being brought into accord with the war effort. Food is an essential war material. I propose to continue the soil conservation and use program on a moderately reduced scale. Acreage control by cooperative efforts of farmer and Government was inaugurated in a period of overproduction in almost all lines of farming. Then its major objective was the curtailment of production to halt a catastrophic decline in farm prices. At present, although there is still excess production in some types of farming, serious shortages prevail in other types. The present program is designed to facilitate a balanced increase in production and to aid in controlling prices.

Work projects.—The average number of W. P. A. workers was two million in the fiscal year 1940, the year before the defense program started; the average has been cut to one million this year. With increasing employment a further considerable reduction will be possible. I believe it will be necessary to make some provision for work relief during the next year. I estimate tentatively that 465 million dollars will be needed for W. P. A., but I shall submit a specific request later in the year. Workers of certain types and in certain regions of the country probably will not all be absorbed by war industries. It is better to provide useful work for the unemployed on public projects than to lose their productive power through idleness. Wherever feasible they will be employed on war projects.

Material shortages are creating the problem of "priority unemployment." I hope the workers affected will be reemployed by expanding war industries before their unemployment compensation ceases. Some of the workers affected will not, however, be eligible for such compensation and may be in need of assistance.

Rather than rely on relief a determined effort should be made to speed up reemployment in defense plants. I have, therefore, instructed the Office of Production Management to join the procurement agencies in an effort to place contracts with those industries forced to cut their peacetime production. The ingenuity of American management has already adapted some industries to war production. Standardization and substitution are doing their part in maintaining production. Ever-increasing use of subcontracts, pooling of industrial resources, and wider distribution of contracts are of paramount importance for making the fullest use of our resources. The newly nationalized Employment Service will greatly help unemployed workers in obtaining employment.

Aids to youth.—Under war conditions there is need and opportunity for youth to serve in many ways. It is therefore possible to make a considerable reduction in the programs of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration. The youth, too, will be aided by the United States Employment Service in finding employment opportunities.

Although I am estimating 100 million dollars for these two agencies, excluding 50 million dollars for defense training, it is probable that the total amount will not be needed. I am postponing until next spring presentation to the Congress of specific recommendations as to youth aid.

Public works program.—The public works program is being fully adjusted to the war effort. The general program of 578 million dollars includes those projects necessary for increasing production of hydroelectric power, for flood control, and for river and harbor work related to military needs. Federal aid for highways will be expended only for construction essential for strategic purposes. Other highway projects will be deferred until the post-war period. For all other Federal construction I am restricting expenditures to those active projects which cannot be discontinued without endangering the structural work now in progress.

Civil departments and agencies.—The work of the civil departments and agencies is undergoing thorough reorientation. Established agencies will be used to the greatest possible extent for defense services. Many agencies have already made such readjustment. All civil activities of the Government are being focussed on the war program.

Federal grants and debt service.—A few categories of civil expenditures show an increase. Under existing legislation Federal grants to match the appropriations for public assistance made by the individual States will increase by 73 million dollars. I favor an amendment to the Social Security Act which would modify matching grants to accord with the needs of the various States. Such legislation would probably not affect expenditures substantially during the next fiscal year.

Because of heavy Federal borrowing, interest charges are expected to increase by 139 million dollars in the current fiscal year, and by another 500 million dollars in the fiscal year 1943. Debt service is, of course, affected by war spending.

COORDINATION OF FISCAL POLICIES

The fiscal policy of the Federal Government, especially with respect to public works, is being reinforced by that of State and local governments. Executive committees of the Council of State Governments and the Governors' Conference have issued excellent suggestions for harmonizing various aspects of State and local fiscal policy with national objectives. These governments are readjusting many of their services so as to expedite the war program. Many are making flexible plans for the post-war readjustment and some are accumulating financial reserves for that purpose. The larger the scale of our war effort, the more important it becomes to provide a reservoir of post-war work by business and by Federal, State, and local governments.

FINANCING THE WAR

Determination, skill, and matériel are three great necessities for victory. Methods of financing may impair or strengthen these essentials. Sound fiscal policies are those which will help win the war. A fair distribution of the war burden is necessary for national unity. A balanced financial program will stimulate the productivity of the Nation and assure maximum output of war equipment.

With total war expenditures, including net outlays of Government corporations, estimated at 26 billion dollars for the current fiscal year and almost 56 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943, war finance is a task of tremendous magnitude requiring a concerted program of action.

RECEIPTS UNDER PRESENT LEGISLATION

Total receipts from existing tax legislation will triple under the defense and war programs. They are expected to increase from 6 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1940 to 18 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943. This increase is due partly to the expansion of economic activities and partly to tax legislation enacted during the last 2 years. As we approach full use of our resources, further increases in revenue next year must come predominantly from new tax measures rather than from a greater tempo of economic activity. Taxes on incomes, estates, and corporate profits are showing the greatest increase. Yields from employment taxes are increasing half as fast; and the yields from excise taxes are increasing more slowly; customs are falling off. On the whole, our tax system has become more progressive since the defense effort started.

Development of major sources of Federal receipts compared with fiscal year 1940

[Indexes, 1940=100]

Source	1940 (actual)	1941 (actual)	1942 (estimated)	1943 (estimated)
Corporate taxes	100	173	328	519
Individual income and estate taxes	100	136	275	405
All employment taxes	100	111	143	209
Excise taxes	100	128	167	184
Miscellaneous receipts	100	[1] 70	90	106
Customs duties	100	112	106	85
Gross receipts	100	134	216	300

[1] Excludes return of surplus funds by Government corporations.

DEFICITS UNDER PRESENT LAWS

The estimate of deficits must be tentative and subject to later revision. The probable net outlay of the Budget and Government corporations, excluding revenues from any new taxes, will be 20.9 billion dollars for the current fiscal year, and 45.4 billion dollars for the fiscal year 1943. Borrowing from trust funds will reduce the amounts which must be raised by taxation and borrowing from the public by about 2 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1942 and 2.8 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943.

Financing of Federal operations, fiscal years 1940–1943

[In millions]

Classification	1943 (estimated)	1942 (estimated)	1941 (actual)	1940 (actual)
A. SUMMARY OF FEDERAL OPERATIONS:				
I. Budget deficit under present tax legislation (*see* p. XXI)	$42, 440. 8	$18, 631. 8	$5, 103. 4	$3, 611. 1
II. Government corporations (net outlays)	2, 941. 0	2, 220. 0	[1] 1, 148. 8	200. 1
Net outlays of Budget and Government corporations (I+II)	45, 381. 8	20, 851. 8	6, 252. 2	3, 811. 2
III. Trust funds:				
Deduct excess of receipts over disbursements under present legislation [2]	2, 763. 9	2, 018. 3	1, 385. 3	1, 159. 3
Combined net cash requirements (I+II−III) [3]	42, 617. 9	18, 833. 5	4, 866. 9	2, 651. 9
B. FINANCING COMBINED NET CASH REQUIREMENTS:				
By borrowing from the public (net):				
Government issues	34, 913. 1	19, 528. 1	4, 602. 3	1, 380. 4
Government corporation issues	[a] 1, 297. 8	[a] 710. 1	972. 8	318. 7
Subtotal	33, 615. 3	18, 818. 0	5, 575. 1	1, 699. 1
Under proposed legislation:				
Taxes	7, 000. 0			
Increase in social security trust funds [4]	2, 000. 0			
Total	42, 615. 3	18, 818. 0	5, 575. 1	1, 699. 1
Adjustment for changes in cash balances during year	2. 6	15. 5	[a] 708. 2	952. 8
Total, financing	42, 617. 9	18, 833. 5	4, 866. 9	2, 651. 9

[a] Deduct.

[1] Includes return of surplus funds to the Budget.

[2] Almost all of this excess is invested in Government bonds.

[3] Includes interest accrued on U. S. savings bonds.

[4] This increase to be invested in Government bonds.

In estimating expenditures and receipts, only a moderate rise in prices has been assumed. Since expenditures are affected by rising prices more rapidly than are revenues, a greater price increase would further increase the deficit.

THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL TAXES

In view of the tremendous deficits, I reemphasize my request of last year that war expenditures be financed as far as possible by taxation. When so many Americans are contributing all their energies and even their lives to the Nation's great task, I am confident that all Americans will be proud to contribute their utmost in taxes. Until this job is done, until this war is won, we will not talk of burdens.

I believe that 7 billion dollars in additional taxes should be collected during the fiscal year 1943. Under new legislation proposed later in this Message, social security trust funds will increase by 2 billion dollars. Thus new means of financing would provide a total of 9 billion dollars in the fiscal year 1943.

Specific proposals to accomplish this end will be transmitted in the near future. In this Message I shall limit my recommendations on war finance to the broad outline of a program.

Tax programs too often follow the line of least resistance. The present task definitely requires enactment of a well-balanced program which takes account of revenue requirements, equity, and economic necessities.

There are those who suggest that the policy of progressive taxation should be abandoned for the duration of the war because these taxes do not curtail consumers' demand. The emergency does require measures of a restrictive nature which impose sacrifices on all of us. But such sacrifices are themselves the most compelling argument for making progressive taxes more effective. The anti-inflationary aspect of taxation should supplement, not supplant, its revenue and equity aspects.

PROGRESSIVE TAXES

Progressive taxes are the backbone of the Federal tax system. In recent years much progress has been made in perfecting income, estate, gift, and profit taxation but numerous loopholes still exist. Because some taxpayers use them to avoid taxes, other taxpayers must pay more. The higher the tax rates the more urgent it becomes to close the loopholes. Exemptions in estate and gift taxation should be lowered. The privileged treatment given certain types of business in corporate income taxation should be reexamined.

It seems right and just that no further tax-exempt bonds should be issued. We no longer issue United States tax-exempt bonds and it is my personal belief that the income from State, municipal, and authority bonds is taxable under the income-tax amendment to the Constitution. As a matter of equity I recommend legislation to tax all future issues of this character.

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Excessive profits undermine unity and should be recaptured. The fact that a corporation had large profits before the defense program started is no reason to exempt them now. Unreasonable profits are not necessary to obtain maximum production and economical management. Under war conditions the country cannot tolerate undue profits.

Our tax laws contain various technical inequities and discriminations. With taxes at wartime levels, it is more urgent than ever to eliminate these defects in our tax system.

ANTI-INFLATIONARY TAXES

I stated last year in the Budget Message that extraordinary tax measures may be needed to "aid in avoiding inflationary price rises which may occur when full capacity is approached." The time for such measures has come. A well-balanced tax program must include measures which combat inflation. Such measures should absorb some of the additional purchasing power of consumers and some of the additional funds which accrue to business from increased consumer spending.

A number of tax measures have been suggested for that purpose, such as income taxes collected at the source, pay-roll taxes, and excise taxes. I urge the Congress to give all these proposals careful consideration. Any tax is better than an uncontrolled price rise.

Taxes of an anti-inflationary character at excessive rates spell hardship in individual cases and may have undesirable economic repercussions. These can be mitigated by timely adoption of a variety of measures, each involving a moderate rate of taxation.

Any such tax should be considered an emergency measure. It may help combat inflation; its repeal in a post-war period may help restore an increased flow of consumers' purchasing power.

Excise taxes.—All through the years of the depression I opposed general excise and sales taxes and I am as convinced as ever that they have no permanent place in the Federal tax system. In the face of the present financial and economic situation, however, we may later be compelled to reconsider the temporary necessity of such measures.

Selective excise taxes are frequently useful for curtailing the demand for consumers' goods, especially luxuries and semiluxuries. They should be utilized when manufacture of the products competes with the war effort.

Pay-roll taxes and the social security program.—I oppose the use of pay-roll taxes as a measure of war finance unless the worker is given his full money's worth in increased social security. From the inception of the social security program in 1935 it has been planned to increase the number of persons covered and to provide protection against hazards not initially included. By expanding the program now, we advance the organic development of our social security system and at the same time contribute to the anti-inflationary program.

I recommend an increase in the coverage of old-age and survivors' insurance, addition of permanent and temporary disability payments and hospitalization payments beyond the present benefit programs, and liberalization and expansion of unemployment compensation in a uniform national system. I suggest that collection of additional contributions be started as soon as possible, to be followed 1 year later by the operation of the new benefit plans.

Additional employer and employee contributions will cover increased disbursements over a long period of time. Increased contributions would result in reserves of several billion dollars for post-war contingencies. The present accumulation of these contributions would absorb excess purchasing power. Investment of the additional reserves in bonds of the United States Government would assist in financing the war.

The existing administrative machinery for collecting pay-roll taxes can function immediately. For this reason congressional consideration might be given to immediate enactment of this proposal, while other necessary measures are being perfected.

I estimate that the social security trust funds would be increased through the proposed legislation by 2 billion dollars during the fiscal year 1943.

FLEXIBILITY IN THE TAX SYSTEM

Our fiscal situation makes imperative the greatest possible flexibility in our tax system. The Congress should consider the desirability of tax legislation which makes possible quick adjustment in the timing of tax rates and collections during an emergency period.

BORROWING AND THE MENACE OF INFLATION

The war program requires not only substantially increased taxes but also greatly increased borrowing. After adjusting for additional tax collections and additional accumulation in social security trust funds, borrowing from the public in the current and the next fiscal year would be nearly 19 billion dollars and 34 billion dollars, respectively. The adjustments are indicated in the preceding table.

Much smaller deficits during the fiscal year 1941 were associated with a considerable increase in prices. Part of this increase was a recovery from depression lows. A moderate price rise, accompanied by an adjustment of wage rates, probably facilitated the increase in production and the defense effort. Another part of the price rise, however, was undesirable and must be attributed to the delays in enacting adequate measures of price control.

With expenditures and deficits multiplied, the threat of inflation will apparently be much greater. There is, however, a significant difference between conditions as they were in the fiscal year 1941 and those prevailing under a full war program. Last year, defense expenditures so stimulated private capital outlays that intensified use of private funds and private credit added to the inflationary pressure created by public spending.

Under a full war program, however, most of the increase in expenditures will replace private capital outlays rather than add to them. Allocations and priorities, necessitated by shortages of material, are now in operation; they curtail private outlays for consumers' durable goods, private and public construction, expansion and even replacements in nondefense plant and equipment. These drastic curtailments of nondefense expenditures add, therefore, to the private funds available for noninflationary financing of the Government deficit.

This factor will contribute substantially to financing the tremendous war effort without disruptive price rises and without necessitating a departure from our low-interest-rate policy. The remaining inflationary pressure will be large but manageable. It will be within our power to control it if we adopt a comprehensive program of additional anti-inflationary measures.

A COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-INFLATIONARY PROGRAM

A great variety of measures is necessary in order to shift labor, materials, and facilities from the production of civilian articles to the production of weapons and other war supplies. Taxes can aid in speeding these shifts by cutting nonessential civilian spending. Our resources are such that even with the projected huge war expenditures we can maintain a standard of living more than adequate to support the health and productivity of our people. But we must forego many conveniences and luxuries.

The system of allocations—rationing on the business level—should be extended and made fully effective, especially with relation to inventory control.

I do not at present propose general consumer ration cards. There are not as yet scarcities in the necessities of life which make such a step imperative. Consumers' rationing has been introduced, however, in specific commodities for which scarcities have developed. We shall profit by this experience if a more general system of rationing ever becomes necessary.

I appeal for the voluntary cooperation of the consumer in our national effort. Restraint in consumption, especially of scarce products, may make necessary fewer compulsory measures. Hoarding should be encouraged in only one field, that of defense savings bonds. Economies in consumption and the purchase of defense savings bonds will facilitate financing war costs and the shift from a peace to a war economy.

An integrated program, including direct price controls, a flexible tax policy, allocations, rationing, and credit controls, together with producers' and consumers' cooperation will enable us to finance the war effort without danger of inflation. This is a difficult task. But it must be done and it can be done.

The Increase in the Federal Debt

On the basis of tentative Budget estimates, including new taxes, the Federal debt will increase from 43 billion dollars in June 1940, when the defense program began, to 110 billion dollars 3 years later. This increase in Federal indebtedness covers also the future capital demands of Government corporations. About 2 billion dollars of this increase will result from the redemption of notes of Government corporations guaranteed by the Federal Government.

These debt levels require an increase in the annual interest from 1 billion dollars in 1940 to above 2.5 billion dollars at the end of fiscal year 1943. Such an increase in interest requirements will prevent us for some time after the war from lowering taxes to the extent otherwise possible. The import of this fact will depend greatly on economic conditions in the post-war period.

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Paying 2.5 billion dollars out of an extremely low national income would impose an excessive burden on taxpayers while the same payment out of a 100-billion-dollar national income, after reduction of armament expenditures, may still permit substantial tax reductions in the post-war period.

If we contract a heavy debt at relatively high prices and must pay service charges in a period of deflated prices, we shall be forced to impose excessive taxes. Our capacity to carry a large debt in a post-war period without undue hardship depends mainly on our ability to maintain a high level of employment and income.

I am confident that by prompt action we shall control the price development now and that we shall prevent the recurrence of a deep depression in the post-war period. There need be no fiscal barriers to our war effort and to victory.

Franklin D. Roosevelt.

January 5, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #798
Executive Office of the President
January 13, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Earl Godwin) Haven't seen you for a long time.

MR. GODWIN: You have been .....? Well, I shouldn't say! (laughter) I've been around.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) Not a word! Not a word!

MR. GODWIN: (to Mr. Early) What's in it? What's in it? (a large, round, cardboard box on a side table)

MR. EARLY: I don't know. (investigates) A cake! For his birthday. (laughter) Smells like frozen cheese.

Q Is it hermetically sealed?

Q Rum flavor?

(the President saw Anne O'Hare McCormick standing in the front row, and shook hands with and said Hello to her)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have had any news for a whole week, and I don't expect to have any for another week, so that's all I have got today.

Q Can you tell us, sir, about your conference with Mr. Willkie this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Very nice talk with him.

Q You discussed the War Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I had a very nice talk with him. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, through the office of your Secretary, there is some indication that you will draw up a list of umpires to work in connection with the War Labor Board, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and it is reported on that list are the names of Farley, Al Smith, and Charles Evans Hughes. Is that correct, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I would put it this way -- I hope so.

Q Hope?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen the list. You know more about it than I do.

Q Can you say anything about price control today?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can you say anything about price control?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean on this bill?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think you probably all got it. I had the -- asked the House conferees here this morning and pointed out to them that -- two things, in my judgment, -- two essential facts.

The first was that the overwhelming majority of farmers of the United States, in every section of the country, do not want to be accused of starting the kind of a spiral that in the long run will be expensive and costly to them, and to everybody else in the United States. They don't want to be responsible for having so called "farm leaders" upset the entire applecart of our war effort.

And the second point is, that if this O'Mahoney amendment should by some chance become law, that it would start a spiral more quickly than any other thing that has been suggested, and would saddle this nation with a much larger debt to meet -- for this generation, and for future generations -- than any other method that I can think of.

Furthermore, that it would be playing directly into the hands of the people who are not engaged in farming, but who are engaged in making things in factories, etcetera, and so would demand wage increases because of the increased cost of living that would necessarily result from the O'Mahoney amendment. And we all know, from history, that when the cost of foodstuffs goes up, other things go up too, and the farmer himself suffers from that increased cost of living just as much as anybody else in the country. Well, that's the whole story in a nutshell.

Q Do you feel the same way about the Bankhead amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that?

Q This other one that gives the Secretary of Agriculture the power to veto?

THE PRESIDENT: I told them that I thought it was thoroughly unsound, to give two Government officials -- one the right to make a decision, and the other one the right to veto it. It is completely unsound administrative procedure, and in the last analysis it throws it back on the shoulders of the President himself, because if I have two subordinates in my Administration who are vetoing each other, it ultimately comes back to me. And of course, they want -- if they want to do that, I suppose I will have to take it, but it is completely unsound.

Q Mr. President, does it actually give one of them a veto over your acts?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I can fire either one. (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, can we quote that?

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (continuing) I say, Mr. President, can we quote that item, "I can fire either one"?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can we quote that, "I can fire either one," I think? It would do more good than anything else.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think that's all right.

Q Speaking of vetoes, Mr. President, have you any thought that you might not sign a bill that would carry ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) We haven't got even to a remote thought of action of that kind. We don't think of things like that until a bill is passed in both Houses.

Q Mr. President, in connection with firing, Mr. -- Secretary of Agriculture Wickard demanded this division of authority apparently, without saying anything to anybody else, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: He says the press is all wrong on that. I got a letter from him, and he accuses the press of completely misunderstanding and misquoting his position. You will have to work it out.

Q What is the date of the letter, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What is the date of the letter?

THE PRESIDENT: Today. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, I got a four-page statement from his office, and I can't tell where he stands on the thing yet.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, probably from his office, like when you get something from Steve. That doesn't mean it's from me, does it?

Q Mr. President, what did the House conferees say about your position?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think they were pretty sympathetic.

Q Mr. President, was anything said about a limit on wages in connection with the general picture?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Does that fit into it at all?

THE PRESIDENT: If the bill went through it would, in the O'Mahoney amendment form -- it would mean a scramble for who could get the most for prices of crops and prices of wages.

Q Would you call it then a bill to encourage inflation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would you call it then a bill to encourage inflation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I would say worse than that. I would say it is a bill to compel inflation.

Q Mr. President, referring to the matter of having two Government officials vetoing each other, have you any plans to change your other setup, the talk about a supply ministry and the organization of the war agencies in general?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got any news on that today.

Q Mr. President, the Lieutenant Governor of the Netherlands Indies left San Francisco for Washington, and the British allowed -- through the censorship -- a story that there were going to be conferences -- special conferences with Netherlands representatives here, and one Netherlands officer might be named to this Pacific high command. Can you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no. I don't think there is any news on that. On this question of a vast area of that kind, you know, you have all sorts of things that, quite frankly, the average person wouldn't understand. The problem, for instance -- between who? -- what? -- strategical command -- technical command -- all kinds of technical things of that kind. I don't think there is any -- I couldn't write a story on it if I tried, because I am learning all the time.

Q Mr. President, could you -- could you clarify statements that have been made about direct dealings between the United States and Australia?

THE PRESIDENT: Direct what?

Q Direct dealings between the United States and Australia?

THE PRESIDENT: Why sure. Direct dealings right along -- have been for quite a long while.

Q That was my impression, but there was some story in the paper this morning about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Nothing new on it. We talk to the Australians every day in the week, and have been right along.

Q In that connection, Mr. President, it is reported that they are going to send some military or naval men here to supplement the present representation. Can you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't -- I wouldn't limit that to Australia. There are going to be people from -- military and naval men from nearly all of the United Nations who will be doing the same thing.

Q Will they come at the same time?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will they come at the same time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, just in the normal course.

Q Will they remain here, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Most of them will remain here, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Some will, and some won't. I don't know.

Q It is also reported, Mr. President, that the Prime Minister of Australia may come here for ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hadn't heard that.

Q Any other high political figures coming from there?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q High political figures coming from there?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Can you tell us what you talked about with the Australian Minister this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, what we have been talking about ever since the 7th of December.

Q Defense of the Southwestern Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: The defense of the Democracies of the world.

Q Mr. President, a Boston newspaper, a few days ago, said that -- carried a story that ex-Colonel Lindbergh is going to see you -- coming down to Washington. Is there anything to that?

THE PRESIDENT: It must be a Boston newspaper. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, you talked to the two District Chairmen this morning. Is there any change in policy, as a result of that transfer of Government departments?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course, I think one thing -- put it this way -- let me use this as "background," for the benefit of the Washington papers, and I don't think I need even say "other papers please copy," because they are not frightfully interested -- (turning to Earl Godwin): with all due deference -- but the -- the general proposition is this.

The country has not -- especially Washington -- has not waked up to the idea that there are going to be a lot more people coming down -- a great many more -- in the next six months to a year. And even if we build all of the McCarran plan, and the Jennings Randolph plan, we would still have to eliminate some of the employees and agencies, and so forth and so on, from Washington to have enough room. I don't think people visualize the number of people that are going to come here in the next six months, so even if we build we will still have to carry through some kind of plan to take some people out of Washington. So put it this way, which is more polite, we may both be right. (laughter)

Q Is it possible there will be some modifications in order?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I don't know why. If somebody would give me an agency that was pleading to get out of town, I might consider it. But I haven't found anything yet. I have been asking after that last week and the week before, "Please give me some department or agency that wants to move." (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: It was a legal matter which Senator McCarran suggested, which may have no bearing at all. He seemed to think that possibly the Budget Bureau, and that means you too, had no authority -- no legal authority to order some of these things out. Did that come up at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that did not come up.

MR. GODWIN: Does that interest you at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a bit.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask you a question? If all these people are coming in, is there anything that you know about adequate plans for adequately housing them -- the defense housing, or some of your projects -- housing programs?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are doing lots of them, as you know.

MR. GODWIN: Somebody has that in mind for this same number of people?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, Yes. All you have to do is drive around.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, there are reports that Mr. William Batt is working as sort of unofficial, or official, head of a special committee, or council, within the O.P.M., or beyond O.P.M., to coordinate the defense effort with that of Great Britain in an economic manner. Is there anything to that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Never heard of it, Tom.

MR. GODWIN: How about it? Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

MRS. ANNE O'HARE McCORMICK: Did Churchill leave you a hat? (indicating the large, round, cardboard box on the side table)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MRS. ANNE O'HARE McCORMICK: Did Churchill leave you a hat?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MRS. ANNE O'HARE McCORMICK: I don't know what that is.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a fruit cake.

MRS. ANNE O'HARE McCORMICK: I thought it was some kind of cake.

THE PRESIDENT: It's for Christmas.

MRS. ANNE O'HARE McCORMICK: You are looking wonderful.

THE PRESIDENT: I'm fine -- fine.

MR. IRVING BRANDT: I bet you haven't missed me for the last few months?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. IRVING BRANDT: I bet you haven't missed me for the last few months? (the President laughed) I am working for the Chicago Sun now.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it. I know it.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #799
Executive Office of the President
January 20, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: (in a whisper, and waving his hand) Good morning!

MR. GODWIN: Good morning!

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to blame Steve. (Mr. Early) I haven't got anything. Not a thing. Dean, have you got anything?

MR. GODWIN: No, sir. I have a letter which says, "For God's Sake, stop speaking about budgets. You are nothing but a big blow-hard." (laughter, and some hand-clapping)

Q Mr. President, would you care ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I feel that way about myself.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the proposed international highway to Alaska that Mr. Daniels spoke about in Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I have a query out. Somebody is trying to find out. Just what the status of it is, I don't know. I don't think they are in agreement on the -- on the line.

Q Could you make any comment on your talk on the Rivers and Harbors appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: Put it this way. I talked this morning with quite a number of them, and as one of them directly said, the country as a whole -- we have said it -- the country as a whole, even Members of Congress, even writers of newspapers, don't know the difference between an appropriation and an authorization. Same old story. And a whole lot of people have been getting the idea that this bill that is out on the floor now, for 900 million dollars, is an appropriation bill, instead of an authorization bill. And as long as that sentiment seems to -- what shall I say? -- it's a -- it's an incorrect belief -- as long as that incorrect belief is out around the country, it may be the best thing to do is not to try to explain the thing, but instead of that to leave out all the items that are authorizations and are not immediate defense needs. Comes to the same thing in the long run practically. And merely -- we have been discussing -- this is not final -- we have been discussing the possibility of putting the bill into such form that they would only authorize those things which are immediately needed for defense. And I am working on that now, on the basis that the items that are in the bill show those items which are considered immediately necessary for defense.

Q (interposing) Could you name any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And we are merely -- I won't speak about any individual, because I haven't got to it yet -- just started it this morning -- trying to pick out those that we consider absolutely necessary for defense, and that would include -- that would include the recommendations from the experts on that subject.

Q Mr. President, can you follow the same procedure on other authorization bills?

THE PRESIDENT: What kind?

Q Public works, and roads, and you also have authorization bills?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I would just as soon. Of course, in another way -- the other side to it is that if they pass authorization bills without any -- any appropriations, it is understood there won't be any more -- any appropriations at the end of the war. It will increase the size of my old "kitty," which I am trying to enlarge all I possibly can, with the definite understanding that the cupboard -- the "kitty" -- is of course to be kept locked until after the war.

Q Does that mean there might be a supplemental Rivers and Harbors appropriation -- authorization?

THE PRESIDENT: As I say, it doesn't really make an awful lot of difference one way or the other, as long as it is definitely understood that none of the money is going to be spent. It is up to Congress. I shan't question one way or the other.

Q Would they have to recall that bill to Committee, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That I don't know. I don't know. I merely -- that is legislative procedure. I am merely doing my end.

Q Mr. President, some of the Chinese, and some others, seem to be worried about statements that have been made that Hitler is the chief enemy, in the sense that they are afraid that means too little supplies for them. Is there anything you could say?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think anybody should have any fear at all. We are doing the best we can.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, now that the submarines are blowing up the tankers, will you build pipe lines?

THE PRESIDENT: What's that? No, we might build blimps. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It doesn't -- the two things don't go together, May. They don't go together, necessarily.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Why not?

THE PRESIDENT: They just don't.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us what the nature of the mission is that you have assigned to Secretary -- former Secretary of War Hurley?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think -- the Army said he had been taken in and given a mission. I think that's all that can be said.

Q Mr. President, the comment, and particularly the remarks you made a couple of weeks ago, about not expanding more plants, has caused a lot of excitement, agitation, and uneasiness on the West Coast. Can you go ahead and say anything further about the policy, particularly with regard to evacuation of the Coast?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about evacuation of the Coast.

Q Removal of existing plants?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The system that has been worked on is not removal of plants, but it is the building up of substitute places to go to in cases of necessity.

Q Does that also mean there will be no further expansion of any existing plants or industries?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily, No.

Q (interposing) Does it mean the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) No, not necessarily. There may be exceptions to the rule, where it is the only place we can do it.

Q Mr. President, would you comment, sir, on the proposal that peace negotiations be resumed between the A.F.L. and C.I.O.?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it. I only have heard what I have read.

Q Mr. President, have you -- there are reports in Rio today that you have conferred by telephone with the Argentine President?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about your conversation with

General Van Mook, the Dutch ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Part of the general -- general work of planning.

Q He told us that you had given him some encouragement that a real effort was being made to move supplies and reinforcements to that area?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q (continuing) No amplification --- ?

THE PRESIDENT: That is quite correct. Oh, No. Off the record, of course, for a very simple reason, I couldn't -- I would like to be able to say to you that such and such things are moving. Immediately they become liable to attack. I can't even say that. I can't tell you when a thing is on the way. I keep -- I can't even tell you for quite a long time after a thing gets there, because they might try to get the ship on the way home. Those things really have to be kept very dark. All I can say is that very excellent progress is being made.

Q Mr. President, there are a good many people on the street, and in the Press, asking what has happened to the Navy with regard to these submarine attacks. Can you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that the -- the only answer would be to invite them to the room that shows the location of every Navy ship, and I couldn't do that. (laughter)

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, we were told you were making what we call "staff studies." Can you give us anything of the nature and the progress on those?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Pete, I would say they cover pretty nearly the whole ground. Again, it is terribly hard for me to talk. They involve the -- the offensive and the defensive in -- what? -- every -- every continent and every one of the Seven Seas.

Q Well, does that include taking up the war supplies council?

THE PRESIDENT: It includes all of war supply -- moving of things from one part of the world to another part of the world, moving ships, and moving human beings. And to particularize -- Gosh -- I would like to, but I don't see how I can.

Q (interposing) Well, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You can almost assume that if you look at a map of the world that we are doing something there. (laughter)

Q Yes. Well, could you say that an inter-Allied, or joint commission, or committee, are being set up?

THE PRESIDENT: They are all -- they are all in existence.

Q Will there be any announcement on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt that. They shift from time to time.

Q Mr. President, you were asked about the question on the Chinese statement by Dr. Sun Fo. Have you made any corrective comment to the Chinese Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think he has made any comment. I don't think it is necessary. I think he understands the situation very well.

Q Mr. President, do you think the Army and Navy should continue acceptance of voluntary enlistments, in view of the expanded Selective Service program?

THE PRESIDENT: We are having a meeting on that -- I think it is on tomorrow or Thursday -- on that very question.

Q With whom are you meeting, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What? With the Army and Navy.

Q Mr. President, do you think there is any connection between the presence of these German submarines off our coast, and the Rio Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Didn't I mention about three weeks -- a month ago -- that they would soon be off our coast? I think so.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you think that is an effort by them to withdraw our warships from the Atlantic patrol?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #800
Executive Office of the President
January 23, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M.

Q Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody this morning?

Q All right, thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Early) What was the name of that picture, "Corsican ---" what?

MR. EARLY: "Corsican Brothers."

THE PRESIDENT: "Corsican Brothers"?

MR. EARLY: "Corsican Brothers."

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. If you fellows ever get an hour off, go and see "Corsican Brothers." I stayed awake half the night after it.

Q Lieutenant Fairbanks?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Gosh, it's a good show. Old-fashioned melodrama. Gee, I laughed.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got a thing this morning.

Q Mr. President, can you clear up these many reports that have been published regarding your conferences with various labor leaders ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got any news on it.

Q (continuing) --- as to a peace plan ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I supposed somebody would ask the question. I haven't got any news on it at all.

Q (continuing) Can you confirm whether ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am afraid I haven't ---

Q (interposing) --- whether Green was here, or Murray ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am afraid I haven't got any ---

Q (interposing) Is no news good news, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is no news good news?

THE PRESIDENT: Not guessing.

Q - Mr. President, have you received the report on Pearl Harbor?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I understand it is due very shortly.

Q And will it be made available, likely?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, the -- some of the political parties in Puerto Rico protested against Governor Tugwell. Have you received that protest?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Have I, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Not to my knowledge.

THE PRESIDENT: Not to Steve's knowledge, or mine. I am afraid it's a very barren day today. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you believe that the problem of Federalization of unemployment -- unemployment insurance compensation should be settled at the same time you settle the 300-million-dollar appropriation for automobile workers?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean on State participation? Well, they are related but they are distinct -- they are distinct problems. And that is a question, of course, for the Hill, whether they put them into one bill or separate them.

Q Mr. President, have you been informed of the nature of the compromise arrived at by the conferees on the Price Control bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have no idea, except what I read in the paper this morning. I have had no word from them.

Q Would you comment on the basis of what you read in the paper this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, are you hopeful of Argentina signing this agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it. You would have to ask the State Department. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you selected the new Ambassador to Moscow yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, No.

Q Do you expect to shortly, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you expect to shortly?

THE PRESIDENT: "Hope Springs Eternal." (laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything on the new Ambassador to Colombia to succeed Mr. Braden?

THE PRESIDENT: I -- I would hate -- frankly, I don't know.

Q Thank you.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have forgotten. (laughter)

Q Have you signed the Lanham Housing bill yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Is there any news on the concentration of the organizations into two agencies that you spoke of a month ago?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got anything. They are going to give me a report very soon.

Q Mr. President, since we saw you, you have seen the Lieutenant Governor of the Dutch East Indies. Could you tell us anything about that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Might get into the military and naval field then.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I feel like saying, "Thank you for what?" (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you for what!

MR. EARLY: (to the President) You have seen them since you saw, and talked to the Press about, the Lieutenant Governor.

THE PRESIDENT: I what?

MR. EARLY: You talked to the Press in your last Press Conference.

THE PRESIDENT: I did. Yes, yes.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #801
Executive Office of the President
January 27, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. S. E. Thomason, publisher of the Chicago Times) You will be pleased to know that this newspaperman sitting on the sofa, named Lowell Mellett -- we are taking over the press. We are putting somebody on everybody's desk, so it will be all right. No discrimination. Doing it with all the newspapers.

(then to Mr. Early) Have you got anything, Steve?

MR. EARLY: No, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Let them come.

MR. SIMMONS: (to the President) Do you want the cake lighted? (A.F.L. birthday cake presented at Noon to the President by the Hon. William Green)(60th Birthday Anniversary of the President -- Diamond Jubilee)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Light it up.

MR. EARLY: (to Mr. Simmons) Bill, throw open the door, too.

MISS D. FLEESON: Look at all the sugar!

THE PRESIDENT: You want a piece of cake?

MISS D. FLEESON: I'd love it.

THE PRESIDENT: Got to be a good girl before you can have a piece of that cake. (laughter)

MR. EARLY: (aside) Stay after school.

MR. GODWIN: How much sugar was in that cake, do you suppose? (laughter) Was it real sugar?

THE PRESIDENT: That's an "A.H." cake -- Anti-Henderson. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (to Mr. Early) What did you say, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Stay after school. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (holding up a small medallion of stained glass) See that? It's out of the smashed glass in the House of Commons. Rather nice. House of Commons in London.

MR. GODWIN: Smashed, you say? Smashed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Pieces picked up from the floor.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

MR. EARLY: Not after the speech? Couldn't get it that quick. Not after today's speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's the other House of Commons.

I think -- I don't think I have anything at all. Everybody in the front row was looking at this very nice piece of glass to hang in the window. (holding it up again) That came from smashed glass -- stained glass in the Chamber of the House of Commons in London, at the time it was bombed.

Q Where did you get it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: The Ambassador (British Ambassador Lord Halifax) gave it to me just now.

Q Who did, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The Ambassador.

MR. GODWIN: The Ambassador.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got anything else.

Q What news did he give you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: None at all. None at all.

Q Mr. President, as a result of the Roberts report, has there been any unification of our Army and Navy commands, regionally or otherwise?

THE PRESIDENT: Not as a result of the Roberts report, but there has been very great progress made in unifying command. Going on now for the last couple of months.

Q Mr. President, will there be any more reports or any more action on the Roberts report of seeming dereliction on the part of Operations and Intelligence? Will there be any study made of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have begun studying the thing, and I am waiting now to have a second -- another conference with the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy. That is all I can tell you at the present time.

Q You had one conference with them?

THE PRESIDENT: I talked to them over the telephone twice, and then on some other work.

Q Mr. President, Prime Minister (Eamon) De Valera (of Eire) has protested against the landing of our troops?

THE PRESIDENT: On what ground?

Q I don't know, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Neither do I.

Q I wondered if you could comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know he had protested. I would like to know on what ground.

Q That he was not informed in advance.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q On the ground that he was not consulted in advance.

THE PRESIDENT: Really? (laughter)

Q On the ground Ireland is an indivisible unit.

THE PRESIDENT: Live and learn.

Q Without politics.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Yes.

I don't think I have got any news at all. It's awful. It's the second time running. Remember what happened the other day? (laughter) We just ran out of news after the first minute. Have you got anything?

Q Have you got any views? Maybe we could have some views, if you haven't any news?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Maybe we could have some views if you haven't any news?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have got an awful lot of views, and I am not allowed to express them except to myself, in my sleep. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, in the three boards that were set up jointly, there is no mention of economic warfare. Will there be consolidation or cooperation between Milo Perkins and (Vice President) Wallace, on economic warfare, and the British?

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I don't know. You know something? I tell you, frankly, that is the first time that I have had the subject suggested.

Q I know they were working together.

THE PRESIDENT: It's not so bad. They are working together, I know.

Q I was wondering if there was going to be any organization on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I -- I rather doubt it. I think they will just keep on working together, and on certain things like raw materials they will be taken care of. On the raw materials, of course, all three boards -- I read a stupid piece in the paper, something about one board being more important than the other two. Of course the three of them are absolutely essential to each other. You couldn't have an allocation of munitions board unless you had munitions, and you couldn't get munitions unless you had raw materials, and you couldn't move the allocations unless you had ships. So "dictum ad absurdum" each partner is equally important with the other.

Q Mr. President, do you think the Irish people have any reason to feel concerned ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now wait. Listen. (laughter) I am not going to lay myself open to stories in the columns and other things like that, by expressing my opinion of the dear Irish. I am part Irish myself, so it's all right.

Q I merely thought, sir, that President De Valera's speech to the Irish people said there was something to be concerned about, and I thought perhaps you could clear that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There isn't anything to be concerned about, except the protection of Ireland.

Q What do you think of inviting him over here?

THE PRESIDENT: I would love to have him. He is an old friend of mine.

Q Considerable has been said on the other side about the purposes of the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) About what?

Q (continuing) --- about the purpose of this movement into Ireland, by the Prime Minister, and by the British Air Minister. I was wondering if you couldn't say something about this for us?

THE PRESIDENT: For the development and carrying on of the war toward eventual victory.

Q For instance, it was said yesterday that this is a vanguard. Do you look on this as a vanguard?

THE PRESIDENT: Somebody said it was an A.E.F., but I think at the present time that we have -- oh -- around different parts of the world -- somewhere around six, eight or ten expeditionary forces. It seems sort of silly to say it is an A.E.F.

However, that is the policy of some people, as you know, because it backs up their policy prior to December 7, so they have to go back to try and carry out the same policy by calling this an A.E.F. As I say, there are six, eight or ten A.E.F.s at the present time that are outside the United States, so you can pay your money and take your choice. You can label one of them an A.E.F. and you can label another one something -- some other fancy name.

Q Are all those A.E.F.s in locations which everyone knows?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Oh No. Oh Lord, No. You didn't think I would tell you? (laughter)

Q Have they arrived at their destination?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think I would say that?

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, has this study of your -- which you spoke of -- has this unified command gone so far as to -- for consideration of a department of defense combining War and Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No.

MR. GODWIN: That is, you have not got -- it hasn't got to that point?

Q Mr. President, Mr. Churchill told the House of Commons today that there would be set up in London and in Washington inter-Allied Councils. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is developing very nicely. It is coming along very good in both places, and several other places too.

Q Mr. President, I notice you said that the unification had been going on for a couple of months. Was that on recommendations of Mr. Churchill?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It had nothing to do with it.

Q Mr. President, could you say anything about progress in getting supplies to the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: We are making very good progress.

Q Men, as well as materiel, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I understood that was supplies. How about men?

THE PRESIDENT: I would call it "help." That is a broad word.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything -- Mr. President, can you tell us anything about this new C.I.O. -- A.F.L. committee that was set up at your suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: They are coming in on the -- what is it? -- 5th of February, for the first meeting?

MR. EARLY: Thursday.

THE PRESIDENT: Thursday, the 5th of February.

Q Mr. President, what is your function in connection with that committee? Do you consult with them, or do you serve as an arbiter?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. No. You got the idea all wrong. This committee -- and one reason why I like the membership of it, it is the kind of a committee that if it was a little warmer we would -- we could sit around the table and take our coats off, and just have -- let our hair down, and talk to each other. That's all.

Q (interposing) That's been the trouble. They have been taking their coats off. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the trouble has been in the past that they have, on these formal things. These will be just informal gatherings from time to time -- no specified times -- to talk over the general situation. Now that is literally all, but you do want to have on a committee of that kind, people that you are -- that you call by their first names, and can have that kind of a get-together, around-the-table meeting. You want to be able to have the kind of a meeting where you won't have a stenographer present.

Q Mr. President, have you decided on the Alien Property situation? Who is going to handle it?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess that will come along. I don't know when -- another week or two -- three weeks. No particular hurry about it, because there is no immediate emergency. It is going along pretty well the way it is. As time goes on it will become, as it did in the World War, more important and probably be set up possibly as a separate agency.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you anything further to say about aid of any sort to the Dutch East Indies and Australia? You made some remark about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same thing. We are sending all the help we can as fast as we can to that whole area.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't see any reason why you people shouldn't use for that area, and try and popularize, a very short term for the Southwestern Pacific, which is very long. It's what we have been calling it now for a couple of months -- calling it the "Abda" area -- American, British, Dutch, Australian.

Q Short for "abracadabra"? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Abda area. It's a very simple word to learn, and it doesn't go up to the -- to Indo-China, or the -- or Siam, or Burma, or China itself. That's another separate area.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #802
Executive Office of the President
January 30, 1942 -- 11.05 A.M.

(today was the President's 60th birthday)

(Mr. Leon Henderson, Office of Price Administration, and Mr. J. Lionberger Davis, were guests at this Press Conference)

Q How does it feel to be sixty?

(the President made no oral reply)

THE PRESIDENT: Rather late. They throw things at me at the last minute.

MR. GODWIN: Are you late? (looking at his watch)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Oh, really?

THE PRESIDENT: I apologize.

MR. GODWIN: Happy birthday, anyhow. Have you seen these automobile stamps?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I saw one. Not in my collection, but in my car.

MR. GODWIN: Do you have to have one?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure I do. I have got one car and two trucks at Hyde Park.

MR. GODWIN: Oh, that's right.

THE PRESIDENT: I had to ask the man up there to buy some.

Q How are your tires, Mr. President?

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) How are your ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q How are your tires?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Tires.

THE PRESIDENT: On one truck they will last six months. On another truck they will last a year. I haven't bought any new ones.

Q Aren't going to either?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Do you think you could get one?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Do you think you could get a tire?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt if I could for my own personal use. I doubt it.

MR. GODWIN: I don't think you can.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be late, but I have had things thrown at me at the last minute.

Somebody raised the question about continuing to give foreign relief without naming any organization or any country. My feeling is that there are working on our side a great -- a good many nations who need things for their civilian population, let us say, need warm clothing -- haven't had wool for a long time -- and that our present efforts to get things to them should be continued without any question. Of course that is merging almost automatically with -- it might be called luxuries for our own Army and Navy boys, things that they don't get in the regular handout from the Army and Navy in the way of warm clothing -- sweaters and things like that. But we certainly ought not to cut off our help that we have given to other nations at this time. In other words, it's all part of the common war effort, and we ought not to discriminate. I suppose that -- just one word that describes the situation, and that is the word "give."

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Give.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We have all got to "give." We have got to keep up our own domestic things like, for instance, the infantile paralysis drive, and a great many other drives -- hospital drives, charity drives of all kinds. And we have got to -- instead of cutting off anything -- just "give" a little bit more. That includes these different organizations that are pretty well tied in together at the present time in cooperation with the Red Cross, and working through the -- I have forgotten the name of the committee -- the Joe Davies' committee.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, approved organizations.

Q Mr. President, does this ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Does that apply particularly to the relief of Occupied countries?

Q Europe, is that?

THE PRESIDENT: You can't -- you can't say Yes or No on that. Some of the -- most of the Occupied countries we can't get anything into.

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) A political thing.

Q Mr. President, would that apply to Vichy?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q To Unoccupied France?

THE PRESIDENT: Where we can get things in, and where we are sure of distribution. That is another thing that I will have to give you, as -- without attribution or anything else -- I do know we have sent quite a lot of food to the children of France, on the -- on the assumption that it would be delivered through non-governmental sources like the Quakers, and the Red Cross, etcetera.

And the experience has not been a hundred percent satisfactory. Some of the food that we have sent over there, most unfortunately has been put on a train, in Marseilles. And the train started, ostensibly bound for an Unoccupied part of France where they needed food for the children, and the train went right on going -- into Germany.

So the thing has got to be awfully carefully checked. Now we certainly at this time cannot afford to send food to an enemy country.

Q Is that an isolated instance, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you had more than one instance?

THE PRESIDENT: There have been a number of small instances. This was rather a large instance.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, did you have something more that you wanted to say to us?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got quite a lot of things.

I have just signed the Price Control bill. And Mr. Henderson says, in recommending that I sign it, that it makes an honest woman out of him. And when I signed it, I said to him it makes an honest woman out of me too. In other words, it's Congressional authorization for carrying out certain things which are inherent in a war situation. He gave me a little memorandum which I can talk to you on, and then this afternoon Leon (Henderson) and Steve (Early) are going to work out for you something that is a little bit longer, in the way of an analysis of what can be done, and what can't be done.

Leon says, "A. The bill is worth having. B. It is another valuable tool to use, in conjunction with other tools, for the control of inflation -- other tools such as taxation, and savings, and rationing."

The framework of the bill is good. Now this is me talking. The framework of the bill is good, because it provides for responsibility in a single Administrator, and a workable set of administrative procedures. The enforcement provisions of the bill are good. We -- the Administrator may license persons who are subject to the Act, and may if necessary secure compliance with the Act through criminal proceedings and injunctions. In addition to that, consumers themselves may bring suits for treble damages against sellers who violate the maximum price regulations. In other words the bill has got teeth in it.

Third, on the whole the rent provisions of the bill are good. If State or local authorities fail or refuse to stabilize rents, the Administrator may move in and establish a system of rent control similar to the system provided for the District of Columbia. That ought to be a definite help in stabilizing the -- what might be called the cost of living.

Fourth, there is a useful and important power given to the Administrator, who may buy and sell commodities, in order to obtain the maximum necessary production.

Fifth, the maximum price provisions of the bill, in relation to non-agricultural commodities, are good. In general -- this is a general statement. We do not make -- call them exceptions. In general, the price of commodities will be based on the levels that prevailed in the first half of October, 1941, adjusted for various factors of general applicability and effect.

In regard to the agricultural commodities, there are certain limitations which are not so good. The real danger -- there are a number of rather technical matters in the agricultural provisions -- but the real danger lies in the provision that no price shall be established below 110% of parity. The objective of course on that, of the Administration, was after very, very many years to -- effort to bring the price of agricultural commodities up to parity. We have been working at it for over eight years. We have not attained the goal, except in a minority of agricultural products, well, such as meat. And we had hoped that the legislation would be in such form that we should seek an average of parity.

This provision of not less than 110% of parity is a very definite violation of an objective which had been sought for eight years by the agricultural population of this country as the goal they set. And, therefore, in regard to the cost of living, the 110% of parity provision is a threat to the cost of living, especially in view of the fact that parity, as you know, is not a fixed amount. It's a relationship of agricultural cost of living to the nonagricultural -- the industrial and other cost of living. And, therefore, as the cost of living goes up the extra 10% goes up, all of which is -- provides for a tendency toward a rise in the cost of living, foodstuffs being a very important item in the average family.

And finally, the bill is certainly worth having. Perhaps it is the best we could have got at this time. We will undoubtedly have to step on the toes of a lot of people, which is again another inherent factor in wartime. We hope by vigorous administration to fill in the gaps in the legislation, and if necessary ask Congress for amendments which will become more clear with the actual operation of the -- of the bill. Having said that mouthful, I will now leave it up to Steve and Leon to work out a method for tomorrow morning.

Q Mr. President, is one of the things you are going to try to have corrected --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Is one of the things you are going to try to have Congress correct this big feature that you have called attention to?

THE PRESIDENT: If it is necessary. If it seems necessary -- ask for amendments, if in the operation of the bill the amendment is -- is important.

Q Mr. President, might the land (??), in determining an increase in price, tend to keep down the increase in parity -- in the increase of parity?

THE PRESIDENT: In some things, Yes; and some things, No. Too general. You can't tell.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, isn't that power to buy and sell commodities, which seems to be limited only by the size of the crop -- isn't that a fair way of combating ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, and then of course also the Farm Credit Administration keeps right on going.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Mr. President, authorized to buy and sell at the highest price fixed in the bill, or some other bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The objective is to keep the thing stable, between a ceiling and a floor.

Q Then the requirement is not to purchase agricultural commodities at 110% of parity?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on the individual case.

Now let's see what else we have got.

Q (interposing) Isn't there a provision in the bill, Mr. President, that forbids buying and selling for the purpose of controlling prices? I had an idea that that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) (turning to Leon Henderson) Leon? I don't know.

MR. LEON HENDERSON: This provision relates to the agricultural commodities, but there is no bar in this bill on the Commodity Credit Corporation's operation. There is some confusion about that, but the legislative history is very, very clear. Brown -- Senator Brown made that very clear, the day the Senate adopted the conference report.

THE PRESIDENT: I was mistaken. I said "Farm Credit." I meant "Commodity Credit."

Q Mr. President, do you know yet who will be appointed Price Administrator? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Ecce homo! (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, hasn't the -- wasn't the controversy -- the probable misunderstanding between Secretary Wickard and Mr. Henderson been straightened out?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there was so much to that controversy as some people thought.

MR. LEON HENDERSON: I am seeing him at a quarter to twelve.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. LEON HENDERSON: Mr. President, Mr. Wickard and I are seeing each other at a quarter to twelve.

THE PRESIDENT: Then they will talk, to see who pays for lunch. (laughter)

Q What's the weight of the gloves?

Q Mr. President, you spoke about inherent powers. Could those carry price control beyond the provisions of the bill in any respect?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought of any. I haven't got any in mind. Well, for example, somebody gave me a memorandum here that somebody was going to ask me a question about moving non-defense people out of Washington. And it is a question of inherent powers. And I suppose if we were to make it very uncomfortable for the -- what shall I call them? -- parasites in Washington, the parasites would leave. There are a good many parasites in Washington today. We all know that. (laughter) I don't know whether that is an exercise of an inherent power or not, but I am inclined to think they would get out. (more laughter)

Q Power to requisition buildings?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, that statement is based on, I think, based on testimony that Mr. Palmer made before the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- Buildings -- Public Buildings (Committee). He said that there were 80 -- 100 thousand people had come here, and 85 thousand more were expected this year, and that you could -- that you were evacuating about 12 thousand Government clerks, and that there was a saturation point which the utilities -- that simply could not -- the city could not stand with its present size, its streets, streetcars, and electric lights. This extra 73 thousand people would themselves bring an impasse somewhere. And this town is considerably upset about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I know what I would do. I would write a story with a headline -- large leadline -- in the Washington papers. The headline -- very simple -- go right in a -- a box -- right across the front page: "Are You A Parasite?" (laughter) Now a lot of people in this town are going to say, "I wonder if I am a parasite or not?" (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Well, you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- you ought to appoint a "parasite commission." We could clean house. (laughter) We could run some of them out.

THE PRESIDENT: We went into it in the World War. Lots of people were personal friends of mine who came down to Washington and just had a good time -- didn't do a lick of work -- men and women.

MR. GODWIN: Well, 73 thousand of them? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What? I don't know. I never counted them, but there were an awful lot around, and they clogged up the actual work -- war work of the Government -- the fact that they were here having a good time.

MR. GODWIN: Well, seriously, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is serious.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- what Mr. Palmer said was that we will ask people to give up their homes and their offices ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) If they are parasites.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) It will not be effective. You can't ask anybody to give up his home or his office or go somewhere else. It's not a good thing, if you will pardon me for making a speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got this memorandum -- I might as well read it. This is from Palmer. What Palmer said was that when the saturation point of construction of housing had been reached in the District, the -- those people now living here not essential to the war effort should be asked to move out. What Palmer had in mind was that class of people who live in Washington because they like to live here for social reasons, or because their girl -- their children are going to school here. People who live in 20-room houses on Massachusetts Avenue, for instance, occupying homes there rather than Government or business --

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Sumner Welles?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- all such interests incident to the normal functioning of the city. There is in effect now, under the war powers of the President, the right for the President to take over dwellings, hotels, etcetera, if needed for any connection with the war, and of course, under that he would have the right to take over smaller types of accommodations. That answers the question.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. Whether you have the right or not -- in wartime only?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Who would determine ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Who would determine whether the occupation is essential?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think I would appoint a committee from the Press. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: That's right.

Q Is the Press essential?

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, how about those on relief in Washington, who can't get jobs? Will they be moved out?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- that -- that end of it is working out pretty well. Most of them are employed, or they are people who have been here for a long, long time. Well, just for example, one of the effects of the -- this is a local story, but it applies to other places too -- you know the blind here in Washington have been provided, for the last seven or eight years, with the right and with enough capital to start a little stand in Government buildings. And they have had a very large number of blind people -- who would be on relief -- running these stands. Well, with the coming of the war and lots more people, some of those blind people who are running stands -- newspapers, magazines, small knickknacks, and even some of the stands have coffee and sandwich stands -- they are making so much money today that we put in additional stands, in order to employ more blind people.

Well, the net result of that action is that there are -- there is a shortage of blind people in the District. (laughter) It is an amazing thing. And they are all having the opportunity to earn their own living, and therefore to go off relief. And there are practically no blind people who are physically capable of running a stand who are on relief at the present time.

It's a very nice illustration of how we are really trying to get down to the individual cases, like handicapped people.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, may we quote that suggested headline, "Are You A Parasite"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, have you received letters from two of the presidents of the Railroad Brotherhoods -- the Firemen and Enginemen, and the Railway Trainmen -- asking you to take over the Toledo, Peoria and Western Railroad?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and I sent it over -- I don't know who I sent it to. I think it was the Railway Labor people that it went to. (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: Yes, I think so.

Q Any decision on an Ambassador to Moscow yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. We hope soon.

Q Are you contemplating any further action on that strike situation, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q On that Toledo, Peoria and Western strike situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, I have asked for a recommendation on it.

Q Railway?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President, and a Happy Birthday!

CHORUS OF VOICES: Happy Birthday!

THE PRESIDENT: (aside to Mr. Godwin and Mr. Early) Look, I hope Sissie (Patterson) won't take that as personal.

MR. GODWIN: I hope she will.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope she will.

MR. GODWIN: She only lives at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue!

(laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #803
Executive Office of the President
February 6, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well?

MR. GODWIN: How do you do, Mr. President?

Q Hi, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I "do" better.

MR. GODWIN: I am another radio man that gets fan mail at the White House, even addressed to me here.

THE PRESIDENT: You and Fala.

MR. GODWIN: Me and Fala! (laughter) I think I will turn it over to you. They all want something.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure? They haven't sent you a collar yet, or a license tag?

MR. GODWIN: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve tells me there is no news. I have been laid up for two days with a bad cold. I am all right again today. There is very little news that hasn't already been given out. Can you think of anything, Earl (Godwin)?

MR. GODWIN: I was going to ask if you had anything to say about Chairman Ed Flynn's recent speech that has attracted a good deal ---

VOICES: (interposing) Louder. Louder.

THE PRESIDENT: I honestly don't know. I don't know what he said.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. Michelson could inform you, maybe.

MR. MICHELSON: What's it about?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen Charlie (Michelson).

MR. GODWIN: Well, is that a serious answer, sir? I would like to pursue it.

THE PRESIDENT: It really is serious, because frankly I have no idea what Flynn said.

MR. GODWIN: He made a statement -- spoke something like this: that the election of a Congress hostile to the Administration would be equal to a major military disaster, or -- or words to that effect.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will tell you -- I suppose the easiest way of putting it is this: that when a country is at war we want Congressmen, regardless of party -- get that -- to back up the Government of the United States, and who have a record of backing up the Government of the United States in an emergency, regardless of party.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) That's it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Put that down again, twice. I think that covers it all right. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: That's fine.

Q Mr. President, there has been talk that there might be a shipping czar, not so much for the ships but for cargo space. There has been some complaint on the effective use of cargo space.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. I never heard of it. We have -- we have a -- in effect a ship allocation czar.

Q That's allocation of ships, but this is cargo space. For instance, some of the stuff coming from this Pacific Southwest has been non-essential materials, and the ships are going down South for nitrates, and going down empty -- not well cargoed, and while the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will look into it. I haven't personally had any complaints about it, but maybe something ought to be done.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Then, of course, we have to remember that in a war it is almost impossible to plan for every ship a schedule sufficiently far ahead to arrange for the best method of shipment, and the best articles to ship, because of the simple fact that in a war a great many ships have a schedule, and without warning, or without notice, we have to break that schedule because of some emergency. But I will look into it and see what it is.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, it might -- might aid you to know that the people who are close to the White House -- I mean these higher-ups in the shipping business, make the -- make the statement that ships on military missions hurrying to get there, will be sixty or eighty percent loaded. Possibly some of that is accounted for because they don't know how to stow things in between whatever they are carrying. That statement comes from private shipping sources. Does that help you any?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it doesn't, because again you run into the emergency question. Sometimes the stuff is not ready, on an outward-bound ship, and we have to send her out sixty or eighty percent loaded, because we can't wait.

Q Mr. President, did you confer again this week with Dr. Van Kleffens, the Dutch Foreign Minister?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am seeing him -- (turning to Mr. Early) -- Am I seeing ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Today.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Today.

Q For lunch, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: About what time is it? (looking at his appointment list)

MR. EARLY: 12.30, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: 12.30. The Minister of the Netherlands, and Lieutenant Governor Van Mook, and Dr. Van Kleffens the Foreign Minister.

Q It seems to be the impression, sir, which Mr. Van Kleffens has in turn added to, that the Pacific councils to which Mr. Churchill referred are now beginning to shape up. Could you throw any light on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Beginning to what?

MR. EARLY: Shape up.

Q Shape up.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think they are.

Q Are those councils to be military, or are they to be political and military, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I'd say -- I would put it this way, that there is the -- down in the Abda area, as you know, there is the military command under the supreme command of Wavell. Now there are certain -- that is -- I suppose it is a -- a slipshod way of putting it, but the operations could be called "tactical." I refer to the certain long range strategic questions which would be referred here, and London. Well London of course includes the -- the British Empire people -- Australia and New Zealand -- and it also includes the Dutch government in London. Now those strategic questions which would be referred -- it isn't a very good differentiation to make -- tactical and strategic -- because it isn't a clear line always. But it is the best -- it is the best terminology that I can think of at this time.

Now on the strategical things that would be referred here, or London -- long range again -- you would have to divide them into two parts. One would be the military and naval, purely, and they would go to the joint staffs, on which there would be consultations, of course, with Australian, New Zealand, and Dutch officers. Another group of questions that would be referred would be more of a political character -- a government character -- and they would be referred to the American government, and the British government, and the Dutch government, and the Colonials' governments represented in London.

Q (interposing) Well, then ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Now, of course, there again you run up against the distinct possibility that you will have something that is partly political and partly strategic. I am thinking in very broad terms, nothing specific at all. Where they have both characteristics they probably would be referred both to the governmental agencies -- the political agencies -- and then the military and naval.

Q Would these so called councils, sir, sit in Washington, or would they sit both in Washington and London?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, they are -- they are sitting both in Washington and London.

Q They are sitting?

THE PRESIDENT: They are.

Q They are in being now?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, they have been for a month.

Q For a month?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: And I think -- I think there is no reason why we shouldn't point out that on the strictly -- the decision end of these things, there is very close cooperation between Washington and London.

I suppose the easiest way of putting it is this: that when a question is raised down in that area that has to be referred, there are two copies made. One copy is marked for action, and that comes to Washington. The other copy goes to London, and that is marked for recommendation to Washington. And, in the event of disagreement, it comes to the higher authorities in both places. There haven't been any disagreements to date, and probably won't be. But the "action" copy comes to Washington.

Q Is New Zealand represented in fact on these councils, or has it been for a month, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. Consult with them all the time. Of course, they haven't had, so far, any very high-ranking officers here. And I think they are sending some men.

Q The Minister (Walter Nash) is here now?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I am receiving him, probably in the course of the next day or two.

Q In that connection, Mr. President, Mr. Nash, at his first Press Conference, spoke of an area outside of Abda which would cover ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- Australia and New Zealand, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- with a recommendation that the headquarters would be here, and who hoped also that the commander would be an American admiral. That hasn't been presented to you as yet, has it?

THE PRESIDENT: The two things have been discussed right along. You are getting down into the detail field, and that is one of the things we can't talk about and put down too specifically, but the thing is working.

Q Mr. President, do you expect any early results from the 500-million-dollar loan to China?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. Quite aside from the -- it might be called the psychological point of view, assuring China through the loan that we are solidly behind them and are helping in every way that is physically possible in the military sense, as fast as we can -- this is a -- a -- will be a very definite relief to the whole financial problem of China itself, through stabilization of their currency, and the ability to get more things that they very greatly need for their armies.

Q Purchasing within China?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Purchasing within China, you mean?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and some things that they can get on the outside.

Q Mr. President, has Senator Reed's amendment on the Wage-Hour Law come to your attention yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you decided on a new Administrator for the Wage-Hour?

THE PRESIDENT: Very nearly. Not quite.

Q Mr. President, when you referred to Congressmen, regardless of party, you meant to include the Senators also, using the general term?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you accepted Nathan Straus' resignation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this is off the record, ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) He bade goodbye ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I have his resignation. I haven't had time to write him a letter accepting it, but I expect to do it over the week end.

MR. GODWIN: Do you care now to mention the name of a possible successor?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, any progress ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What I would like -- I think this probably had better be completely off the record. It is rather a nice thought.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) As long as you don't attribute it, you can use it. We are acquiring, have been acquiring for some time, and undoubtedly will acquire more Nazi internees, and Nazi prisoners in this country who would be of course placed -- what's a polite term? -- behind barbed wire and adequately taken care of. And, perhaps there is some merit to the thought, it would be rather a nice gesture to put Nathan Straus in charge of those Nazi internees. (loud laughter) Do you think it's a good idea?

MR. GODWIN: Was that off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you can use the attribution -- background ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Background. I don't think that would be possible to work out.

THE PRESIDENT: What? That doesn't seem to be possible to work out?

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, all right. You can attribute it as a very "pious" thought. I suppose that's the best word.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

Q Mr. President, do you expect to take any further action to speed up the construction of the New York City Massena power line?

THE PRESIDENT: I read something in the paper about it not being allowed to go through three miles of the Adirondack Preserve. I haven't seen anything.

Q That is a smaller portion of the line, Mr. President. The line from New York City to Taylorsville has still not been cleared in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Last I heard was a couple of weeks ago, and they were clearing it. Now whether it has been done or not, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, will an Ambassador to Russia be appointed soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It's in the works?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's in the works.

Q Today, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Not till Monday.

Q Mr. President, have you given any thought to the appointment of Ambassadors to Bolivia and Paraguay?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We have given a good deal of thought to it.

MR. GODWIN: You are not ready to announce it?

THE PRESIDENT: Not ready to announce it yet.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #804
Executive Office of the President
February 10, 1942 -- 4.10 p.m.

MR. DONALDSON: All in. (this was scarcely heard above the hubbub)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have sent out a letter to all heads of departments, agencies, etcetera -- a memorandum saying, "It is essential that an equitable and uniform practice be followed in applying provisions of the Selective Service and Training Act to officers and employees in the Federal service. The policy with respect to deferment from military training and service on occupational grounds, recommended in the attached memorandum of February 5, has my approval, and all concerned will be governed accordingly."

And I will ask Steve (Mr. Early) to have some copies or photostats made of the recommendations to me by Secretaries of Treasury, War,Navy, and General (Lewis B.) Hershey, and (Wm. H.) McReynolds, Personnel Administrative Assistant. And see if I can shorten this a bit for you, and many other items, on what it's all about.

They recommend, and I have approved and put into effect, the following: Request for deferment from service of any officer or employee of the Government shall be made only by the head of the appropriate department. Such request must be made on forms prescribed by the Selective Service System.

Secondly, no such request shall be made except when the head of the department shall certify, first, that the officer or employee is in a position, the duties of which are clearly related to the war effort or its essential supporting activities. Secondly, that the officer or employee is in a type of position listed by the Selective Service as one in which it is difficult to obtain replacements, or a type of position in which he cannot be readily replaced except by the training of a successor through work experience for a period of at least six months.

Number three, the initial request for deferment will be for a period of not to exceed six months. If the duties of the position are of a type requiring work experience of at least two years, the appropriate agency will take immediate steps to train a successor.

Fourth, request for deferment beyond the initial six months period will not be made except when the head of the department certifies that one of the following conditions exist: First, that to attain reasonable competence in the duties of the position, work experience of two years or more is necessary. Second, that replacement has been secured for the individual, but that a further period of training is required before the trainee is qualified to go in. And third, that the Selective Service system has found that a shortage of persons with qualifications required in the particular position exists, and that it has been impossible to get a replacement. Heads of all departments make inventory of all officers -- to make an inventory of all officers and employees who in all probability will be placed in Class 1A, and where necessary recruit and begin the training of persons who are to take their places.

I think that covers that pretty well. That goes with it Steve. (handing Mr. Early some additional papers)

Q Mr. President, do you have any estimate on the number of persons who might be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Not yet. Steve just asked for it. They will probably come in very soon.

Q Mr. President, do you care to comment on the speech made by Premier (Mitchell F.) Hepburn of Ontario today, in which he says that the Japanese have obtained such naval superiority in the Pacific that the present United States Fleet is in hiding?

THE PRESIDENT: Very simple answer in two forms. I haven't seen the entire speech, merely an alleged excerpt. And secondly, if I did see the entire speech it would be of course for Ottawa to say anything, and not Washington.

Q Mr. President, the -- the hearing -- investigation of the Farm Security Administration is going on before a committee on non-essential expenditures. Would you care to say whether you consider their work non-essential?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it is extremely essential to keep that going. Our whole food situation for the duration of the war is intimately connected with it. Furthermore, the whole problem of security for a large number of individual families is at stake. Of course it is essential.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, in that connection ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Mr. President, in that connection it has been testified and admitted, as I understand it, that the Farm Security Administration has in Alabama paid poll taxes. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that they should pay the poll tax.

Q Mr. President, it was also brought out by Senator La Follette today that Ed O'Neal has a checkoff system by which public Alabama landlords and others are collecting dues of the American Farm Bureau Federation from sharecroppers. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say exactly the same thing. I don't think they should do that.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your conference with Mayor LaGuardia?

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't he see you on his way out?

Q No.

Q No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, he is ending his service. He brought out a point which I hadn't thought of before, but it is perfectly true. He wasn't appointed because there was some -- some question in the -- in the New York constitution as to whether he could take appointive office.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But I requisitioned his services. I think he has been serving without pay, and he is now -- what do you call it? -- relinquishing that work, having arrived at the period of the completion of the organizational work.

Q Who will succeed him, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. -- Dean -- Dean Landis.

Q He will get the title too, will he?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. I guess he will be paid too. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Off the record, whether he does a Sally Rand act or not. (more laughter)

Q The final say -- will his say be final?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will his say be final?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not. You might kill him. (laughter)

Q Will Landis say in his --

THE PRESIDENT: His "say"? I thought you said his "pay." Oh! Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you have any sort of order in preparation for creation of a manpower mobilization board, to make the powers -- to consider mobilizing manpower for industry as well as the armed forces, and allocating the same?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say that the matter is under study still. Has been for about -- about three weeks.

Q Is it near completion, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

Q Is there any truth to reports that Mr. Hillman will head ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. We haven't got to the problem of personnel yet. It is entirely a problem of how to organize it.

Q There are also reports that he has been offered the position of Secretary of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Good. Good.

Q Could you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't care. The papers can print what they want. They will probably be wrong, but that is up to the papers.

Q Mr. President, is there anything being set up to manage the Fisheries in order to obtain that 200 million pounds of exports ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Manage the what?

Q The Fisheries, in order to build up 200 million pounds of export that there is planned ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't heard anything about that at all. You mean to increase the catch of fish?

Q Well, it is partially that, but to handle the problems connected with ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) With what?

Q Military -- 200 million -- 200 million tons of -- of dried -- canned fish that are to be exported under Lend-Lease. And I understood that there was some Executive Order being prepared to set up a body ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't heard it. I hope we can export 200 million pounds.

Q (interjecting) Pounds.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I never heard about it. It would be a grand thing if we could get that many fish to export.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conference last week with the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. committee?

THE PRESIDENT: We had a very useful and very pleasant round-table talk.

Q There was a story published this morning, sir, that you had read to them a memorandum from Leon Henderson opposing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I didn't read them any ---

Q (continuing) --- specifically ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- memorandum from anybody.

Q Mr. President, you conferred with Congressional Leaders with regard to the St. Lawrence today. Did anything develop from that?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing further than the fact that it is in the report of the Committee, and in the bill. That was all.

Q What is that that is in the report of the Committee? Can you say what?

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead and build the dam. Can't get anything out of the needs of the Government until you build the dam.

Q Well, does that mean that it will be taken up in the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh Yes.

Q In the future?

THE PRESIDENT: It is in the bill.

Q How about the navigational feature, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: You have to build a dam before you can do anything. Let's build a dam.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, it has been suggested ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That -- that -- that's what they call a practical Dutchman talking. (laughter)

Q It has been suggested in the House that you exclude Congressmen from the new expanded pension retirement system. Has such a suggestion reached you personally?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard anything about that at all.

Q (interposing) Representative ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Except one of my friends came in and told me that under the bill he thought it applied to the President of the United States, and by paying a few dollars down the next -- little less than three years, that I could get a permanent pension for the rest of my life, at $37,500, which -- that would be quite a discovery, wouldn't it? I would be able to retire on $37,500 a year by the payment of five percent, or something, for a few years.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there are some Congressmen who would like to have you find a way to get them out of it. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is always one way out. That is not applying for the pension. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, would you sign a repeal bill?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would you sign a repeal bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to see just how it was phrased first. (laughter)

Q Mr. President -- Mr. President, were you ever under the New York State retirement fund?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I was under it for four years.

Q You are not under it now?

THE PRESIDENT: No. When I came down here they quit paying me interest, and I asked to get the principal back, which I did.

Q The reason I ask was that both of the New York Senators are still in under that, and apparently they could qualify without any trouble under the Federal system?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, both.

Q Double pension?

THE PRESIDENT: Surely.

Q Mr. President, do you plan any additional steps in the cases of Admiral Kimmel and Short?

THE PRESIDENT: The matter is still under study.

Q Mr. President, a great deal has been said and written these days on the matter of "complacency" in this country, in the face of bad news in the Pacific. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and a part of it is true. Not all of it, because I think we are beginning more and more, every day, to be more realistic in regard to the existing situation. And there is a better understanding in every part of the country that whether we like it or not this is a -- a world-encircling war, and that the first objective, obviously -- I am talking what might be called major strategy now -- is to prevent a break-through, and cause as much attrition of the resources of the enemy as all of us can during the period in which we are able to build up the overwhelming superiority which is necessary and which will be forthcoming while we are engaged in preventing break-throughs, and damaging or destroying as much of the personnel and materiel of the enemy as we possibly can.

Q Mr. President, Mr. (William L.) Batt said last week that a great many Americans do not realize that we could lose the war.

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are getting into "if" questions. I am only talking about realities as they appear today.

Q (interposing) Could we quote you on the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That answers that question.

Q Could we quote you directly on your answer to that previous question?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think you can paraphrase it all right.

Q Mr. President, in connection with what you just said, some of the men who kept their mouths shut for two months are now breaking out with "I told you so's" about airplanes and tanks and guns. Would you care to comment on their morale-building statements?

THE PRESIDENT: What? In what particular, I mean? That is too general.

Q Well, they are saying, "I told you so. We haven't got the planes. We haven't got the tanks. We haven't got the guns." They shut up for two months, but they are breaking out again.

Q (interposing) Senator Wheeler, specifically. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Those that didn't tell you so two months ago.

THE PRESIDENT: What did they say two months ago, that there weren't estimates and appropriation bills -- not large enough?

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Isn't that the implication in the words, "I told you so"? I think that answers it pretty well.

MR. J. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(as the newspapermen were leaving, a reporter asked the President when the resignation of Mayor LaGuardia became effective. With Mr. Early standing beside him, the President answered that it was effective immediately)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #805
Executive Office of the President
February 13, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M.

(Sir Philip Gibbs was a guest at this Press Conference)

THE PRESIDENT: Earl. (Godwin)

MR. GODWIN: How are you, sir?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have, for quite a long while, been interested in one particular housing program that is very much needed in the city -- outside the city of Detroit. Really this is more a local than a national story, but out there they have got this new Willow Run bomber plant in Ypsilanti, with a great many -- it will, when it is going full speed, probably use 75 to 100 thousand people in it. And there is not enough housing in that area. This is perhaps illustrative of some of the things that are, on a smaller scale, the same kind of problem. And they have been talking -- oh, I don't know, what? -- two months about meeting some of them. The trouble is that this area includes probably half a dozen communities, and three separate counties, and the State of Michigan, and various agencies of the Federal Government. And when you get a situation like that, there is only one thing to do and that is to tie it together under somebody.

I have asked Frederic Delano to assume the job of bringing all these different agencies together -- local and county, State and Federal, and get something started. So I have sent him a letter to that effect. He has already held two or three conferences here, and will go on out to the site -- place -- and hold further conferences there. And we hope to get fairly quick action, considering the number of governmental --

I don't mean Federal -- Federal and State, and county and local (agencies) together, and try to see if we can't get the thing started.

MR. GODWIN: Get what started? The housing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) This housing.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- housing matter?

THE PRESIDENT: This housing facility. We don't even know how many houses should be put up. We don't even know yet definitely how many families, as families go out there, would have to be taken care of.

Q Is this -- is this the so called "Defense City," sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I believe some people have called it that, but that's using a name which should not be used. It is the Willow Run bomber plant housing problem.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Did you say ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Because it may not always be in one place, it is a misnomer to call it a defense city. It is a question which is being held on that line.

MR. GODWIN: Sir, did you ---

Q (interposing) How much money ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. We don't know yet.

MR. GODWIN: Did you say that 75 thousand to 100 thousand people would be in the bomber plant, or near the area?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I understand that it's in the bomber plant -- tremendous big thing.

Q This will not affect Mr. Delano's position on the (National) Park and Planning Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q This will not affect ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh No.

Q Mr. President, did you see Secretary Wickard's statement that the F.S.A. (Farm Security Administration) has not been paying poll taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I did, and somebody -- I don't know who it was -- I think you did it -- (pointing to Phelps Adams of the New York Sun) -- you asked me a question based, as it turned out -- you put it as a statement of fact, and you asked me a question based on that statement of fact. It turns out the statement of fact was not true.

It ought to be made perfectly clear that the poll taxes were not paid by the Government in any way, shape, manner or form. In other words, let's tell the real facts.

These tenant people, these people who come under Federal grants have a budget which is made up -- well, that includes everything, every necessity of life. It includes food, includes clothing, includes a bed to sleep in, and it includes taxes of all kinds. And in those budgets they allow people to put down one form of tax, which is a poll tax. Therefore, the premise was entirely wrong, on the Hill and here. I accepted it because I supposed that it had been definitely stated or established that we were -- that the Government was paying the poll tax. That was not true. And you can't wiggle it round to make it seem as if it was true. You may also, if you did that, say that the Government was paying them some other form of tax. The taxes are a liability on the individual tenant. Now that's the real story.

MR. P. ADAMS: May I simply point out that I said that "I understood" ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. P. ADAMS: (continuing) --- that Mr. Baldwin (C.B. Baldwin, Administrator for F.S.A.) had admitted that they were paying the poll taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And there were a lot of people that fell into the same mistake, that is perfectly true, including some Members of the Senate and the House, I think. But actually it was not true. They were allowed to put in their expenses, very properly -- their poll tax.

And of course the type of mind of some people -- I am not talking about you (Mr. Phelps Adams) -- I am talking about people on the Hill and -- Oh, what? -- columnists -- (laughter) -- some of them -- it's the same type of mind that really was quite thrilled seven or eight years ago, when there was a drive in this country to prevent anybody on W.P.A. from voting. Now that is an awfully good parallel. I am talking about types of mind. Why, there were cheers and yells from that type of mind in the country when it was proposed that persons, because they were poor, would have to be cut out from voting -- the right to vote. That is just a little saying -- what will I call it? -- a homily. I think you will catch on. You know what I mean.

Q Mr. President, do you -- do you approve of the poll tax in principle? Do you think it's a sound tax, anyway?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the best thing to do is quote the war editor of the Montgomery Alabama Journal and let him talk to you.

> (reading): "No one questions the wisdom of the Alabama law which prohibits anyone from paying another's poll tax. It might be a good --"

and mind you that is a State tax --

> "--it might be a good thing if it were enforced generally in the South, but the law does not forbid a farmer or anyone else to go to his bank and borrow money to pay his taxes -- poll taxes or no poll taxes. Why then all the fuss about the F.S.A. which is the only bank available to many farmers?"

MR. GODWIN: That's right.

Q Do you think the poll tax in itself, Mr. President, has kept the poor people in the past from voting in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, of course it has.

Q Do you think that is a good idea?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have been opposed to a poll tax all my life.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, at the same time there was something about a checkoff ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, Pete. I asked Wayne (Coy) about that just now, and I don't know. We haven't got the information on it -- whether that is allowed in the budget or not.

Q I understood that that was not denied.

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. You would have to go and find out. Now, let's see ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you any thoughts on the status of French-American relations?

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Relations of the United States and Vichy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you will have to ask the State Department about it.

Then I have got one other thing. The other day -- three days ago -- I had -- Oh -- after two or three weeks of study, we sent a directive to all departments, establishments, agencies, etcetera, on the question of personnel facilities which have become available because of the additions of the 44-hour work week.

> (reading): The voluntary extension of the work week to 44 hours by practically all agencies throughout the departmental and field services has augmented the manhours of Federal employment.
>
> "This substantial increase in the work week has provided material relief for those agencies that were under-staffed to meet their increased work -- work load under the defense program, and calls therefore for a re-survey of personnel requirements during the remainder of the fiscal year, and the next

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> fiscal year. These agencies which were adequately staffed on the basis of a 39-hour work and are not confronted with an increase in the work programs are now obviously under-staffed in most cases. [over?]
>
> "It is imperative that this manpower be immediately capitalized and effectively channeled into defense work. It means that the agency heads must survey every operational activity and determine those employees who may be promptly released for employment in other agencies. Particularly in Washington, this action must be expedited in order to help meet the shortage in personnel and housing and to avoid as far as possible bringing new employees into the city. To the extent that personnel -- experienced personnel can thus be obtained, the housing situation in Washington will be helped, and the demand for office space decreased."

And this has been going on for several weeks.

> "I have instructed the Director of the Budget, in cooperation with the departments, to review the appropriations for personnel services, departmental and field, in view of this new situation, and establish administrative reserves for the remainder of the fiscal year 1942, in proportion to the approximate increase in manhours that are accruing to the respective agencies."

Then, of course, that is merely another step in the same line as the step the other day for the relief of people who are liable to the Selective Service law. That will take some people out too.

MR. GODWIN: Perhaps this is interesting -- to us locally. Many clerks complain -- it's not general but they say ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- that their extended hours leave them with nothing to do at certain -- not enough work to do.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the reason for this. Exactly.

Q Mr. President, will copies of this ---

THE PRESIDENT: (after turning to Mr. Early) Steve will give you copies.

I think that's all I have got here.

Q Mr. President, is there any estimate on the number of persons who might thus be diverted from civilian departments to war effort under this ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Of course, it will depend -- it will depend on what develops out of this. Of course one development is that you can't generalize. And it always raises on these surveys, which of course go on all the time -- Budget -- all the time to the appropriation committees of the Congress -- and they -- they aim to cut down certain things not connected with defense, but you have to get Congressional action for it.

Well, let us for example take the case of -- oh -- the bright boys who say you can curtail all of the Federal expenditures. Well, all right. When some bright boy who writes that and sobs over it that it hasn't been done, you ask him a question and say, "Where?" He says, "Oh, well ---. That's a detail. That has nothing to do with me. I am a leader of public opinion on this thing. I am not supposed to know any details."

I had one of those chaps in the other day. You have read a lot of his stuff, and -- and I said, "Where?" And he couldn't tell me where, that was not his business, where to curtail. So I said, "All right, let's take an example -- meat inspection -- meat inspection. It costs the Federal government an awful lot every year for the inspection of meat, and to see that it is decent meat for people to eat." I said, "Do you want to curtail that? Perfectly possible in wartime to curtail that. Absolutely simple. All you have to do is to get the Congress to eliminate or greatly curtail meat inspection. It's a cinch. Why not? It's wartime. Who cares whether we eat diseased meat in wartime? Save money! It will save -- what? -- a few million dollars."

Well now, it's a question -- if the nation wants to stop meat inspection it has an absolute right to do it through its elected officials. And I won't curtail, because the Congress has told the Executive that meat is to be inspected. And, therefore, having put that job on the Executive, the Executive sends to the Congress an estimate, and then the Congress goes over that estimate and tries to find out whether there are too many people for the inspection of meat. And sometimes they cut it down a bit, and I have known them to raise it. And we get inspected meat. Now they can cut that out any old time they want. I can't do it, because they have given me a directive to inspect meat. Well, that's a pretty good example.

You take dozens and dozens of bureaus here in Washington. Your glib boy says, "Oh, cut them all out. Cut them all down." Congress has an absolute right to cut them out, or cut them down. I have a directive.

That really is the -- the problem on going -- taking steps -- just rule of thumb -- Executive steps beyond this question of seeing, as we are trying to do now and have been for some time, whether this increase in the hours of work is not going to be -- enable us to carry on meat inspection and other things, and have some people left over. And it is going along in an orderly way. We have already impounded of course an awful lot of money which the Budget didn't think was necessary to expend, while at the same time we were carrying on the obligations imposed on the Executive by the Congress.

Q Mr. President, I am not one of the glib boys. What about the three C's and the N.Y.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the N.Y.A., just to take an example is turning out, I think, between 80 and 90 thousand boys who are being trained for defense work, every three months -- every three months.

MR. GODWIN: Are they being trained for mechanical work?

THE PRESIDENT: For mechanical work, Yes. Well, I think that answers your question.

MR. GODWIN: Well, do you know how much ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There are some boys still in the C.C.C., though a very greatly reduced number. They are very nearly all people who have not reached draft age yet, and some of them are physically too -- they are not acceptable to the draft. And others are too young. Others, by going through the C.C.C., will be physically satisfactory for the Army or the Navy, when they reach 20 years old.

Q What about rehabilitating the C.C.C. boys then -- boys that are physically unfit?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. They have done a lot of that.

Q (interposing) Is there any check on that?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and a very large number, I can't give you the figure offhand, of the C.C.C. boys have been rehabilitated, and been made useful for defense work, where they couldn't go to the front.

Q Some -- months ago Mr. Morgenthau suggested a cut in the farm section (??). Now prices are up. How about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Congress has an absolute right to cut them any time they want.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, the American -- the American Forestry Association viewing the C.C.C. and the N.Y.A. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- and the trends, complains in a public statement that whatever is going on is increasing the fire hazard ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) It is.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- in the forests. Do you know anything about that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is perfectly true. In cutting down on the C.C.C. -- mind you it might be slow but we call it a voluntary cut because the boys are not applying -- we are decreasing the number of fire-fighting ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- units in this country, not only in the large forests themselves but on the lands that have trees on them, public lands and private lands too. And the fire hazard is therefore greater. But actually that is a moot question as to how many people we should employ in keeping the fires out of the forests. It is a question which is being -- being taken care of by itself almost. We are only taking volunteers and those who are taken are, in general, not people who could serve in the Army.

MR. GODWIN: Voluntarily in C.C.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: In C.C.C. Nobody is compelled to go into the C.C.C. It's an application.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) No.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They are not people who would be taken into the Army, and most of them are not people who have any skill on machines.

Q Mr. President, aren't 10% of the C.C.C. enrollees still war veterans?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I can't tell you the percentage but we still have quite a number of camps ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) 10%?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and I think probably I would suggest you might go up and see with your own eyes any veterans' camp. Talk to the men. Talk to them while they are there, and your story would be very different from what you would write if you hadn't been there. I think it is a very nice and humane -- right thing to do.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, are you planning to make some sort of a radio address Sunday?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, whatever the time is. Monday, not Sunday.

Q The announcement in Ottawa, sir ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the President) That's the recording, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the recording. It's already been done, only don't say that, because it will take the bloom off ---

Q (interposing) Is it for this coming Sunday, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is it for this coming Sunday, sir?

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the President) Yes, Mr. President, it is Sunday evening. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I guess you had better not mention it at all because I don't want to take the bloom off for the Canadians.

Q Mr. President, it has already been announced that you are participating in some sort of national broadcast.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good way of putting it. I am -- I am participating.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you a job -- make it another way -- do you know anything about Admiral Hart's future? Have you a job for him -- a duty for him?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course he has been not well at all. He is on his -- he is going to come home.

MR. GODWIN: Well, I ask you that, sir, very frankly.

THE PRESIDENT: He is going to come home as commander-in-chief of the Asiatic

Fleet.

MR. GODWIN: Lots of his friends seem to think that he has had an unfortunate deal. And I put it that way, because it is quite news in Washington in Navy matters.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I'd say that was typical.

MR. GODWIN: All right. He is coming home as commander-in-chief?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: He is coming home as commander-in-chief of the Asiatic Fleet?

THE PRESIDENT: Of the Asiatic Fleet, Yes.

Q Hasn't that been suppressed, the "Asiatic Fleet"?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Hasn't that term been suppressed?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is it not now called the "United States naval forces in the Southwest Pacific"?

THE PRESIDENT: That's only for the joint operations.

Q Oh, I see.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q But the Asiatic Fleet term still exists?

THE PRESIDENT: C. and C. -- Asiatic.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Can you tell us something of the program to cooperate with Brazil, to get rubber and other vitally needed strategic materials? I believe you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) We are doing all we can to get the rubber out. I think I mentioned a few weeks ago the total rubber supply that they could get out of Brazil would be a minimum that everybody knows about --

accessible rubber -- about 15 thousand tons now. Anything over that has got to come out of the wild forests. It is a question of getting people in, and getting the stuff out. Now how much that will run in excess of 15 thousand tons, I don't suppose anybody in the world can guess. The estimates run from -- what? -- 30 thousand tons up to 60 to 70 thousand tons, and it's pure guess. It is a question of getting human beings to go into these jungles and tap the rubber trees, and get them out, and then get the rubber itself ---

Q (interposing) Isn't there also ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- down the river.

Q Isn't there also a health problem there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The average life of a rubber cutter ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- in Brazil used to be three years.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The natives don't like to go in there. They realize that it is pretty risky stuff, but we are getting out all we possibly can, and of course that part will be financed ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you like rubber? (more laughter)

MR. EARLY: (to the President) Sir Percival (Philip) Gibbs is here, and wants to say Hello.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. Sure. (who then spoke with the President)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #806
Executive Office of the President
February 17, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Aha! I have got all kinds of things -- and nothing.

Q For us?

VOICE: (as Mr. Godwin sits down) Easy does it.

MR. GODWIN: Good morning, Chief.

THE PRESIDENT: When does our turn come to register, Earl?

MR. GODWIN: You know ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Pretty soon, isn't it?

MR. GODWIN: I didn't look that far forward.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: I didn't look that far forward.

THE PRESIDENT: Some day we will have to, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: The day I got a commission in the last War the German retreat started for good.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

MR. GODWIN: I think ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did it? Good. It's all right.

Q Tell Bill Donovan.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Earl (Godwin) and I were talking about the day we would be old enough to register in the Draft. It would be a great sensation. What percentage of the White House Correspondents' Association had to register? I saw the percentage at Congress.

MR. GODWIN: Quite a good set.

Q They even got (George) Durno, Mr. President.

MR. EARLY: Three or four hands are going up. Their hands are going up.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope you will have good luck and be called soon. (laughter) I have so many things I haven't got any particular thing I think I can start in on. Have you got any ideas, Earl?

MR. GODWIN: No, sir.

Q Mr. President, did you know about the bill that the Attorney General recommended to the Congress yesterday, on disclosing contents of any confidential or secret documents -- no definition of "confidential," or "secret"?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't.

Q Didn't have anything to do with this Chicago Tribune disclosure, did it?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know there was one -- that he put in one. Oh, I knew about the Chicago Tribune one, but I didn't know the Attorney General ---

Q (interposing) Apparently that affected the case? I mean if you remember the story ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- it doesn't seem to be limited to military information?

Q No.

Q Any confidential documents, anything they declare confidential, they can't get to it.

THE PRESIDENT: I give it up. I couldn't define these days what is military and what is not. Maybe lawmakers can.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there are persistent reports that Secretary Knox's report on Pearl Harbor did not tell all. Can you comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what ---

Q (interposing) That it was worse than the report indicated?

THE PRESIDENT: What report?

Q Secretary Knox's statement on our losses at Pearl Harbor.

THE PRESIDENT: When did that come out?

Q When he came back from the Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you want him to do, disclose all the military information they saw out there?

Q No, sir. Reports that are going round have been printed that the losses were greater than he had -- than he indicated.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know what epithet you can use for the kind of report that you are referring to -- I don't mean Secretary Knox's report -- the kind you are referring to. (spelling out): R-O-T is the best word for it. And there are an awful lot of reports going around town.

MR. W. H. LAWRENCE: What does R-O-T mean?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. W. H. LAWRENCE: What does R-O-T mean?

(loud and prolonged laughter, during which the President laughed and clapped his hands together in delight)

MR. EARLY: (to the President) Did you see the (Washington Evening) Star cartoon today? Look at it.

MR. W. H. LAWRENCE: I give up. (more laughter)

MR. EARLY: (to the President) Look at the Star cartoon today, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know who it was asked that question. I wish he would look at the Star cartoon (by Clifford K. Berryman) this evening. It will be a very good thing if it is circulated around this country.

The millstone that Uncle Sam is holding, carries out the thought in Mr. Winston Churchill's speech, that, "Whoever is guilty of bringing a crime -- of bringing about the crime of disunity, of him let it be said that it were better that a millstone were hung about his neck and that he were cast into the sea."

And over in the corner of the room is a poor little fellow called John Q. Public, and there is a -- another figure, what might be called a type -- people that you see more frequently in Washington than in any other community in the country.

And he is saying, "The British want to fight to the last American."

"Why help the Russians? They will turn on us later."

"We ought to pull out of the Far East. We can't win here -- can't win there."

Well, I think the cartoon is a pretty good one, and it is especially applicable to Washington, D. C. -- people that you see and hear around here. It is the worst rumor factory, and therefore the source of more lies that are spoken and printed throughout the United States than any other community. Now let that sink home about Washington. And you can prove it very easily.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I can prove it. You can prove it.

Q These reports are coming from the West Coast, and as to the gossip recently---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q (continuing) --- they seem to be rife out there.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, probably, they started here and were relayed to the West Coast so that you would get the proper date line.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment, in that connection, on the arguments that are made against loans to Russia, on the theory that it is dangerous to make loans to them -- they will become too powerful after the war?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think that argument is about on a par with other arguments that are set up by the Cliveden set of Washington.

Q (interposing) Would you care to specify ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You have read something about that too.

MR. GODWIN: Would you care to disclose who the Cliveden set ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You know the names.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. Would you care to get any closer to it than ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I am awfully polite.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us something about the new loan to Russia which is now apparently in process of being made?

THE PRESIDENT: I think one of the things is -- is that on the original loan we are getting down to the point where most of it will have been obligated. That means not paid out of the Treasury, or anything like that. But it has been obligated, so that when the stuff is made it will be paid out, and that in order to keep the stuff going and the flow continuing without interruption, we will soon have to have more Lend-Lease authorizations so that that flow can continue.

Q There were reports, sir, apparently from pretty good sources here that deliveries going to Russia were running considerably below the commitments we made to the Harriman mission in Moscow. Is this connected in any respect to those reports?

THE PRESIDENT: The two things are totally different. The stuff that comes out of this loan has nearly all of it just begun to go, although in the last couple of months now, in actual deliveries, there was a promise -- entirely different thing -- of things which had already been completed, you see, and that we would get -- this was last -- Oh, what? -- September was it? -- about there -- October -- that we would send -- so many tons is the easiest way of putting it -- put it in individual articles like planes -- so much a month. And we were up to the promise of shipment on the 7th of December. And then we slowed up in December, and in January, and fell behind the schedule of shipments. And by the first of March we will have caught up again in those two weeks.

Q Did you discuss this matter, sir, with the Soviet Ambassador and General Repin?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q By the time the Nazis could launch an offensive in Russia in the spring, Mr. President, will our shipments be up sufficiently so the Russians will have all the materiel we promised them?

THE PRESIDENT: Our promise on shipments will be up to date on the first of March, less than two weeks from now.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And then from then on, of course, it will be -- quite a lot of the stuff which had been obligated under the first Lend-Lease money will be coming along, so they will be getting it right along.

Q Could you tell us, sir, the amount of the new loan ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know.

Q (continuing) --- in contemplation?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the strategic value of the loan to us -- the strategic value to us of the loan to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: Put it in terms of dead Germans and smashed tanks. Isn't that a pretty good strategic sentence?

Q It's okay with me.

Q May we quote that directly, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No! (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there seems to be considerable concern in the country over the possibility of an attack this year on Alaska. Can you give us any reassurance as to the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course I couldn't give you any assurance on exactly -- on what is going to happen this summer. But a thing like that is perfectly possible -- perfectly possible from the point of view of enemy operations.

Q I was about to ask ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q (continuing) --- whether in your opinion the air force as it stands, and the Navy as it stands in the Pacific, are sufficient to deal with anything?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Certainly not. They can come in and shell New York tomorrow night, under certain conditions.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They can probably, so far as that goes, drop bombs on Detroit tomorrow night, under certain conditions.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the agitation to have General (Douglas) MacArthur ordered out of the Philippines and given over-all command?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I think that is just one of "them" things that people talk about without very much knowledge of the situation. A very polite statement.

Q Mr. President, have you a particularly personal interest in the plans for Willow Run, the new model city -- garden city -- which is to go up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Didn't I talk about that the other day?

Q You said (Mr. Frederic) Delano was going there.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything since. I don't know if he has gone or not.

Q Tomorrow, I believe.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. I don't think ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, could you tell us anything, sir, about your conference with the British Ambassador today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. We had a very pleasant lunch -- a good lunch. It has to be a good one.

Q He didn't look as happy ordinarily, Mr. President, as a man who ate a good lunch. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, he had an awfully good lunch.

Q Can you tell us anything about plans for the Alaskan highway -- the proposed Alaskan highway?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The War Department is -- I think it has just about completed working on plans. There are various routes that have been suggested, and if there is going to be anything accomplished that would be useful by January, 1943, something would have to be done in the next couple of weeks so as to get the advantage of good weather -- the whole summer -- get the materials up there.

Q Do you think it important to get something started before then?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is important to get better communications to Alaska.

Q Through Ontario?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you would have to have a map before I could talk to you. It wouldn't be intelligent -- in other words, there are various things that have been suggested. It has been suggested that for the immediate needs of this war it would be more practical to build a -- a light, one-track railway -- easier to keep it open in the winter. Well, that is one of the things they talked about. Another suggestion is that it would be more practical to send things up on the inland passage -- to the end of the inland passage and then a highway from there on. And others have said it would be easier to do the whole thing by transport planes, instead of building a highway. I am speaking in terms of military needs of this year, and possibly of the beginning of next year. Well, I don't -- I could not prognosticate what they will do, if anything.

Q Mr. President, got any decision on Admiral Kimmel and General Short?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

MR. J. HENRY: Thank you, Pr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

MR. GODWIN: I might have had a story.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: I might have had a story there. (laughter)

(Notebook VII-PC -- P.102 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #807
Executive Office of the President
February 24, 1942 -- 4.10 p.m., E.W.T.

(as John Henry, newly elected president of the White House Correspondents' Association, walked up to the President's desk, the President shook hands with him to congratulate him)

MR. J. HENRY: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

MR. J. HENRY: If you want a good campaign manager, Mr. President, let me recommend George Durno. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That trick of the wrist with the gavel -- (demonstrating) -- you had better practice.

MR. J. HENRY: I would be glad to do that.

THE PRESIDENT: (spreading out a newspaper map from the London Daily Express) Now that's a newspaper map that is one. I thought you would like to take it out afterwards and feel it. It's quite heavy paper. It's the kind of thing that could be distributed in an edition by the richer papers -- the syndicates or something. It's a peach. And it has got most of -- I am sorry to say most of the maps that I saw yesterday and the day before in the daily papers did not have most of the islands that I was talking about on them at all.

Q We have a new setup in the press room in the National Geographic ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. It's awfully hard to print a good map as part of a paper. It ought to be separate.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I was just showing the front row -- this is not for publication, it is between us -- it's off the record -- I am talking about our -- our profession at this time. This is a British newspaper map, and I will get Bill (Hassett) to take it out to the press room. It happens to be the (London) Daily Express map. You can -- technically it is pretty good. The quality of the paper is fairly stiff -- the kind of a map that is extraordinarily accurate.

Last night a lot of people were looking at maps, I am sorry to say, that -- for example, on the islands between Pearl Harbor and the Philippines -- the maps -- a great many of the maps I saw did not have the islands on them at all. You might work this up, if some of your offices are interested. I think it would be an awfully good thing to get out something like that, because it -- it is a permanent thing -- in good shape -- and would be a very nice Sunday present for the richer papers. (laughter) So, Bill, take it out and show it to them, because it is quite interesting.

Q Mr. President, in your speech last night you emphasized the difficulty of getting ships to the Bataan peninsula. Correspondents who are subject to military censorship there have been sending stories recently indicating -- quoting officers and men, saying how badly they want planes. And today there is a story by Clark Lee of the Associated Press, saying they are taking up a fund to buy one bomber. Could you make any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if you will tell me how to get a bomber in there, they can have a bomber.

Q Couldn't it be flown in, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: And land on what?

Q Well, maybe a bomber could land on the sea, couldn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: On the sea? How long would it remain intact? What kind of a bomber landing on the sea? One of the B-17's? I'm afraid they wouldn't float.

Q Mr. President, some of us have made the interpretation that since these stories are subject to military censorship, that this indicates that perhaps MacArthur is a little at odds with the high command here as to the possibility of reinforcing him. Do you think that is a correct interpretation?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't do any -- well, I wouldn't -- I am trying to take a leaf out of my own notebook. I think it would be well for others to do it. I -- not knowing enough about it -- I try not to speculate myself.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, would you be disposed to say anything about General Chiang Kai-shek's statement in India, with reference to Britain, and so forth?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, Jim. I saw a statement out of London on it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: That might mean that maybe they were willing to have something said about it now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we can all have our opinions. Sometimes -- sometimes it is better not to burst forth with them. That applies to public officials, and American newspapers, in relation to the affairs of other peoples and other nations.

MR. J. WRIGHT: One more question then, Mr. President. In your -- in your speech last night there seemed to be a paragraph that related to that situation -- or similar situation. Is that what you intended?

THE PRESIDENT: How do you mean, Jim?

MR. J. WRIGHT: You spoke about the self-government of peoples, etcetera, there in one paragraph?

THE PRESIDENT: Well ---

MR. J. WRIGHT: (continuing) --- I wondered if you had this in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I had -- I don't know, I would hate to count them up -- just dozens of situations in mind. So did Churchill when the Atlantic Charter was drawn up.

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interjecting) Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words -- this is off the record -- don't you think we might win the war before we start determining all the details of geography, and of forms of government, and boundaries, and things like that? Wouldn't it be just as well to win the war first, as long as you have principles?

Q Mr. President, would you comment, sir, on the shelling of the California coast by a submarine last night?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the best comment is to repeat what somebody said earlier this morning, just after I got waked up, and that was that it was an excellent example of political warfare. I think it was too.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Only I think it might -- it might react in the -- in the opposite direction from what it was intended.

Q Mr. President, have you any information from the Navy as to what happened to the sub?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

Q As to what ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh No.

Q (continuing) --- happened to the sub?

THE PRESIDENT: No. At the present time it is probably under water. (laughter)

Q How far?

Q Voluntarily?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Voluntarily?

THE PRESIDENT: So far as I know, voluntarily. (laughter)

I got a long thing here today to give you. If you have got any other questions first, go ahead and shoot them. Then I have a whole story for you.

Q I have one, sir. In your radio talk last night you mentioned at one point Americans who in and out of government since Pearl Harbor have been whispering all these rumors about the Fleet, and the planes, and casualties, etcetera.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Did you have anyone specifically in mind when you said that?

THE PRESIDENT: Quite a number of people.

Q Would you care to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- mention any names?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you know just about as well as I do.

Q Mr. President, there is a report published in a Mid-West paper that Secretary Hull was going to resign?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw that report, because it was sent over to me, and it has already been commented on by the State Department, ---

Q (interposing) But with ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- so I think ---

Q (interposing) --- due deference to you, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q With due deference to you, sir, that is why I asked the question of you.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think the State Department characterized it as a flat lie. Furthermore, that the whole story was a flat lie.

Now this has got to be off the record, because it is just between us. There is one of the things that I was talking about last night. This has to be off the record -- the Miami-Herald and the Detroit Free Press ran a story this morning to this general effect: that indignant British and Russian officials in Washington have made known their feelings regarding the situation in the Caribbean, which is swarming with Nazi submarines based on French islands.

Now, in the first place, I raise the question, just among us, as to whether that is not, ab initio, a lie. I don't believe that indignant British and Russian officials in Washington made their feelings known. I don't believe it for a minute. I think that's pure invention on the part of the young gentleman who wrote the story, and many of you do too. No responsible British and Russian officials have said anything of the kind in Washington.

I will make an even money bet with the fellow who wrote the story. I will make an even money bet today that no responsible Russian or British official said so, because any responsible British or Russian official would not deliberately say something that he knew was not true. That comes right back to the fellow who wrote the story.

Number two -- based on French islands. As far as anybody in the Navy or State Departments, or I -- Consular services, or anything like that are concerned, that is not true. We have had absolutely no information. Then he goes on and says, "the presence of these submarines in the vicinity was known February 2, and a high British officer who had been there made a report on the Vichy French there," and he goes on, "told the State Department about the submarines."

Well, our -- well, the State Department swears that nobody did such a thing, and I don't believe that any high British officer did it, because as I think the -- the Under Secretary of State mentioned this morning, we have had an observer in Martinique for over a year and a half, and we have had awfully good information about everything that has happened down there. Kind of a little bit of a place, as you know. It would be mighty hard to hide any -- any German submarine base in those islands, without everybody knowing it inside of -- inside of 24 hours.

And then it goes on and talks about the Secretary being at Coral Gables, and of course he is. This is all off the record entirely -- the Secretary has been really very, very ill, much more so than you fellows have printed in the papers. And I am very grateful that you haven't printed the fact that he was very ill. We think he is going to get all right in the course of the next two or three weeks. But he does have to have absolute, complete rest. There is no thought about his being ousted from the Cabinet, or resigning, or anything else.

Well, the rest goes on about the so-called appeasement policy. But the point of it is this: that that is an awfully good example of just what I was talking about last night. It is incorrect information that starts people whispering and talking on lines which are based on falsity. Now there you are. Now there is the example -- probably came out in those papers within -- simultaneously with my talk last night. And that is the thing we have to guard against.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, I have a very small question. (laughter) Every spring a great many high school seniors come here for a spring trip. They are writing in now to us asking whether they should or should not come to the crowded city here. Do you have any thought on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, for publication, May. It's awfully hard.

MISS MAY CRAIG: I know.

THE PRESIDENT: I would say if they can come here and have a good time, and go away without using up too much gas, and without "discombobolating" Washington, it would be all right.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Most of them make their reservations the year before, but the hotels now would like them to give them up because they are crowded.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know whether they "discombobolate" or not. It is a thing for them and the hotels to work out.

Q Mr. President, there has been some confusion about who is going to handle alien property. Can you straighten that out?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Still studying it. There won't be anything on it for a while.

Q Mr. President, in connection with these stories about Secretary Hull, there have been some stories printed about changes in the Cabinet, some of which are not destructive or merely critical. Could you say if you have any plans whatever ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Absolutely none.

Q None?

THE PRESIDENT: Are you ready for this Order?

Q (interposing) Can you tell us, sir, whether there is anything new on the manpower mobilization board?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing yet.

Q Soon, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Well, here is this -- two Executive Orders. And this is quite important.

As you know, we started in with certain kinds of housing, quite a long -- a good many years ago -- six or seven years ago. And in a sense it grew up like Topsy, for the very good reason that when each new organization was started there seemed reason at the time for making it a separate organization by itself. And the result has been, over a period of years, that it has become pretty evident that we ought to have some kind of a simplification, based on the general thought that housing of human beings is a subject that is separate in itself, even though it affects all kinds of -- different kinds of people. The housing has to be of all kinds of different characters, and it affects a good many different departments that housing in the country has become such. And there has been so much recognition of the fact that it was a permanent problem, not slum clearance, but to take care of changes to improve conditions to keep people from losing their own homes.

That was one of the earliest things -- Home Owners' Loan Corporation, to encourage building, Federal Housing Administration, etcetera -- that after a long study we at last got it down to the point of having a consolidation of all housing.

And the first Executive Order sets up this new organization, to be called the National Housing Agency. And I am putting in charge a young man who has been in the Government, and has shown amazing executive ability: Jack Blandford -- John Blandford, Jr., the Assistant Director of the Budget.

This new organization will be able -- you can get an idea of the thing -- (holding up chart) -- there is the old -- I have got copies of these outside -- there is the old organization, you see how complicated it is. And this is the new organization -- (holding up chart) -- you see how much simpler it is. Bill will have copies of those for you.

The -- I suppose I had better go through it in this way. This is a consolidation for swifter and more efficient prosecution of the present war, consolidating the various housing agencies in one National Housing Agency, with the single Administrator having the full power to carry out the responsibility. This plan of consolidation resulted from unusually widespread agreement among Government officials and all kinds of students of housing in the practical, private field who are actively engaged in day by day administration of housing activities, in and out of the Government.

Heretofore, there have been 16 different agencies which have either built housing with public funds or sought to encourage private enterprise to build housing with private funds through the extension of Government credit or guarantees. The result has been without any question a lot of duplication, conflict, disputes and overlapping among these public agencies themselves, and also between them and private building agencies.

The plan of reorganization streamlines most of these agencies, and the leasing -- the housing functions of all of them into one agency with a single Administrator. In this Agency, and under him there will be consolidated war and other housing activities that have heretofore been carried on by Federal Housing Administration; Federal Home Loan Bank Board -- you will get all this afterwards -- Federal Home Loan Bank System; Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation; Home Owners' Loan Corporation; U. S. Housing Corporation; U. S. Housing Authority; Defense Homes Corporation; Non-farm Public Housing, Farm Security Administration; Federal Works Agency; Public Builders -- Public Buildings Administration; Division of Defense Housing and Mutual Ownership Defense housing Division in the Federal Works Agency; and that part of the War and Navy functioning that is not on military or naval reservations. Then also the defense housing of the Farm Security Administration, and the Division of Defense Housing Coordination.

Now part of these agencies that are transferred to this National Housing Agency by this Order are now in Federal Works Agency, and the rest are now in the Federal Loan Agency. We are taking them out of those Agencies -- I would say of Federal Works and Federal Loan -- and we are abolishing the Federal Loan Administration altogether. So we are not -- we are creating a new agency, but we are abolishing the old one. So you have the same one as you had before.

Those things in -- in the Federal Loan Agency which are not housing are being transferred to Mr. Jesse Jones as Secretary of Commerce. He has been handling them in the past in his position as Federal Loan Administrator. Well, that title is being taken away from him, but we are turning over to him as Secretary of Commerce all the things like the -- the R.F.C., etcetera, and lots of others -- a whole group of them that have hitherto been Federal Loan Agency.

Q Is the R.F.C. as such abolished?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Oh No. Oh No. Nothing -- how could you -- you couldn't abolish the R.F.C! (laughter) It's put under (Jesse) Jones as Secretary of Commerce, instead of (Jesse) Jones as ---

Q (interposing) Will it still retain ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Federal Loan Administrator, that's all.

Q (continuing) Mr. President, is there a Federal Loan Agency left?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I said that is abolished. That has gone.

Q But the individual components of that Agency still remain?

THE PRESIDENT: Of the R.F.C.? Oh, sure. Because they are doing the bulk of the loaning we do.

The third constituent -- wait a minute now, I am getting ahead of my copy -- it means that the recent Order for the conversion -- for the transfer of Government workers to the war effort is going to be attained also in housing, because on this reorganization there will be quite a lot of people who will be let out, or rather who would be let out, if it were not for this transfer Order of the other day. They will be transferred to other agencies of the Government, probably defense agencies of the Government.

Q About how many, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a thing that we can't give you the figures on. But quite a lot.

All Government employees doing work relating to war housing will be under one pool, under one supervision. The new agency for administrative convenience will have under it only three principal constituent units. That in itself is a great streamlining of the Public Housing Authority, which will be an amalgamation of all the various agencies and personnel engaged in constructing housing with public money. That is the distinctive feature of that.

(Leon) Keyserling will be the Acting Administrator of that Division. The second Division will be the Federal Housing Administration, and will continue to be known as such. In other words, the guaranteeing or insuring of mortgages placed by banks and lending institutions on homes. And Mr. (Abner) Ferguson will continue as Commissioner of that, only we are going to call him Commissioner instead of Administrator, because Administrator is the name of the top person in charge of the whole works.

The third will be the Federal Home Loan Bank Administration, and will include all the functions of the Home Loan Bank System. John Fahey will remain as Commissioner of that.

All of these three units will be under the supervision and administrative control of the National Housing Administrator. He will also thus be able to save a lot of overhead in consolidating all of the functions now scattered all over the place relating to research in housing construction, materials, methods, etcetera, and general urban development planning relating to housing and similar facilities.

The Order will not cause one day's delay. Actually it ought to begin within a very few days to speed up the production of war housing.

Q Mr. President, will Mr. Keyserling be called Commissioner?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will Mr. Keyserling's title be changed to Commissioner?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q What will happen ---

Q (interposing) What will happen to Mr. (Charles F.) Palmer, the (Defense Housing) Coordinator?

THE PRESIDENT: I am coming to that in a minute. (laughter) At the same -- that's all in one Executive Order. Then there is another Executive Order by which we transfer the functions of the present Federal Loan Agency to the Department of Commerce, and abolish the Federal Loan Agency. Those functions that are transferred to the Department of Commerce are the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; Electric Home and Farm Authority -- this is all down -- R.F.C. Mortgage Company; Federal National Mortgage

Association; Disaster Loan Corporation; Export-Import Bank of Washington; Defense Plant Corporation; Rubber Reserve Company; Metals Reserve Company; Defense Supplies Corporation, and War Insurance Corporation.

And they all go out from under Mr. Jones, and under the control of Mr. Jones. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you say why they go to Commerce? Is it because of the personality involved? Why not ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- send them to Treasury?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It's because essentially I would like to see the Department of Commerce built up with things that don't -- ought not to be under the Treasury; and yet I suppose the easiest answer is that the Commerce seems to be the best place to put them.

And then I have written a letter to Mr. Palmer, asking him in behalf of the new National Housing Agency -- with one or two assistants -- to proceed to England as my representative, and representative of the National Housing Agency, to study and report on the work over there at the end of two years and a half of actual war, because as each month of war over there has gone on, they have modified and developed their various methods of dealing with housing.

I think that covers it all right. I am glad to get ---

Q (interposing) (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's very good.

(Notebook VII-PC -- Page 115 - JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #808
Executive Office of the President
February 27, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. J. Henry, new president of the White House Correspondents' Association) How is it weighing on your shoulders?

MR. J. HENRY: Taking it all very lightly.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think he looks older?

Q I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Getting a little gray.

Q He's bearing up -- a little shiny.

MR. J. HENRY: I certainly look much balder.

Q That's because of his "coronation."

THE PRESIDENT: Is that it?

Q That's because of his "coronation."

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Yes, yes. When are we going to have the induction?

MR. J. HENRY: We would be glad to have you come, if you could attend?

THE PRESIDENT: We ought to have one.

MR. J. HENRY: We will have to wait until Steve (Early) gets back.

THE PRESIDENT: Has your Association got a gavel of its own? It has, hasn't it?

MR. J. HENRY: I don't know.

Q No.

Q No, it has not.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got about 20 or 30 gavels at Hyde Park. I think I will have to give you a gavel -- with an inscription. (laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: Fine. Fine.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything. You got last night the Executive Order, putting the defensive harbors on all three coasts under the Navy, which is just another means of unifying things. And probably the Navy will use that part of the Navy which is most familiar with port conditions -- I would say the Coast Guard as the nucleus to build up that protection ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the Coast Guard command.

Q (continuing) --- will that include mine-laying?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Will it include land guns -- coast -- for harbor defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. Oh No.

Q Just naval?

THE PRESIDENT: Docks, and things like that.

Q Mr. President, it is designed rather against internal sabotage than external attack, is it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, is there any reason why the memorandum from the joint C.I.O.-A.F.L. committee should not be made public?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there were several memoranda. I don't think there is any one that you can get your teeth into though. It is part of a discussion stage, as I said the other day, in regard to the cost of living. And I think, as I also said the other day, the -- in viewing the cost of living, whether -- whether one should, or even whether one shouldn't take into consideration a whole lot of elements such as the regional element or the local element.

Oh, I read in the paper that the cost of living in Washington, D. C., was higher than any other place in the country. I don't know. Should that be taken into consideration, or should we view the thing from the average of the -- of the whole of the nation? That is just something that is being worked on.

Q Did that report, sir, make a recommendation for a new independent or new division of the Labor Department, to handle the questions of mobilizing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wouldn't say Yes, and I wouldn't say No. It was one of the matters that was talked about in the discussion.

Q Have you defined in your mind, sir, any definite policies toward the mobilization question on manpower?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q How soon do you expect to?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Thank you.

Q Does there seem to be any serious conflict between the position taken by the two labor groups and by Price Administrator (Leon) Henderson?

THE PRESIDENT: Very little.

Q Mr. President, would you comment on the Smith (Rep. H. W. Smith, Democrat, of Virginia) proposal about the 40-hour week, now in the House of Representatives?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't read the amendment. The only way -- thing I can do is to talk to you as "background," without attribution. As I understand it, this would repeal all kinds of -- of laws, except I think the railroad employees laws.

Q (interjecting) And the one on postal ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q And one about postal clerks.

THE PRESIDENT: And one about postal clerks. And of course at the present time we have to remember that we are working a great deal more than 40 hours a week -- some industries that are working as high as 60 hours a week. I suppose the -- I haven't got any figures, but I suppose the average is around 44 or 46 hours a week at the present time. So the general effect of an amendment repealing existing laws might be used for the purpose of eliminating any payment for overtime. Well, that would mean, of course, a reduction in the pay envelope at the end of the week, or the end of the month. And as far as I can see, that would be about the only effect.

Q Mr. President, isn't it also true that this would eliminate the 40-hour week requirement in non-defense industries?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Yes. The repealer would do that.

Q Also the textile industries, in Cox's (Representative E. E. Cox, Democrat, of Georgia) District?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Clothing --- (laughter)

Q Mr. President, this would -- Congress could not pass a bill which would rescind or void the present contracts, would it? For instance, any number of contracts are on a 40-hour week ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- some of them for time and a half, and some for double pay?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is true, but the contracts keep running out all the time.

Q Well, most of them have a continuing clause that they can be taken up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. By either side.

Q By either side. But the point is they are rarely done.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: Might Congress -- Congress enact a law which would void those contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, Pete. I would have to ask a better lawyer than I am.

Q The point is that if the Congress cannot, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- then those that have contracts are in a better position than those who do not?

THE PRESIDENT: That is right.

Q You don't know whether that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q But, Mr. President, I would like to say that there is a tendency in contracts now to refrain from putting in the 40-hour -- 8-hour -- under the law, and if the law changes --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) On the contracts it depends mostly on the individual case.

Q Mr. President, has there been any suggestion that the President should have discretionary powers in regard to the 40-hour week?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I have ever heard of. (laughter)

Q In that connection, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q (continuing) --- last Monday a thousand citizens of the town of West Warwick, Rhode Island, addressed to you a petition recommending that you put the nation on a 168-hour work week. Have you seen anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: 168-hour week? (laughter) How many days is that?

Q 7 days.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Seven 24-hour days.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh! I see. No time out to eat?

Q Apparently not.

THE PRESIDENT: Probably most of the nation would be dead at the end of one week. (laughter)

Q Have you seen that petition, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you remove the 40-hour week restrictions without Congressional action?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any 40-hour restriction at the present time.

Q I mean -- abolish time and a half, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wouldn't abolish time and a half. I don't want to have people get less in their pay envelopes than they are getting today, especially with the cost of living going up.

Q Mr. President, does that need to be "background"?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That is all "background"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Don't bring me into this thing. It is purely a matter for the House at the present time.

Q Mr. President, the Nazi radio from Paris today reports Admiral Leahy has demanded of the Vichy government that they do not use any of their ships of the French Fleet without the consent and approval of Washington, that Vichy in turn has rejected that request, and Admiral Leahy will be recalled. Can you say anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: That came from Paris?

Q It came from the German radio in Paris, as I understand it.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you have answered the question.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, the Executive Committee of the New York County Democratic Committee is meeting this afternoon to try to pick their leader. Have you any advice to offer them?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, a dispatch from Berne quotes the Moscow radio as saying that the Russians have sequestered Japanese property in Soviet territory. Have you any advice to that effect?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, have you heard anything about this production program at Mount Gilead, in Ohio?

THE PRESIDENT: I will be perfectly frank. I got it just one second ago. Bill (Hassett) gave it to me along with a lot of stuff. I am going to read it this afternoon. I don't know anything about it now. Just got it.

Q Mr. President, some days ago we were told that a system similar to convoys would be worked out for protection of South American -- Latin American shipping. Can you tell us anything about that without revealing military secrets?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It would reveal military secrets if I did.

Q Can you say that something is being done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are trying to protect as many ships as we can, on all of the oceans, with an insufficient amount of "butter" to go around on a very large amount of "bread."

Q Mr. President, anything new on the Alaskan highway?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word. What is Congress doing on it? Anything at all?

Q It's still in the House Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Might ask the War Department on that, because they have got all the documents and everything else. And I am -- frankly I am waiting for a positive, definite recommendation from the War Department.

Q Mr. President, any of the South American countries contributing a little "butter" to that "bread"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes. That's right. They are.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment about the practice developing in Congress of placing vetoable legislation on non-vetoable bills?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have changed much in the last -- well, let us see -- from 1913 on I have had a rather definite idea about it, that it is not quite fair either to the Congress or to the country to attach riders to principal, main appropriation bills which relate to matters which are not exactly germane to the fact of appropriating under an authorization. It is a very -- it is a very reprehensible method of legislating.

Q (interposing) Specifically ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think most of the country has always felt it.

Q Would you suppose that violates the spirit of the Constitution?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I wouldn't go so far as that because that might be bringing in a Constitutional argument. I don't think it is a Constitutional question so much as it is a matter of -- well, what shall I call it? -- legislative ethics.

Q Specifically, Mr. President, do you want to make any further observations about that Farm bill that was passed the other day against your advice?

THE PRESIDENT: Well -- except this: that it seems to be pretty true that it would raise the cost of eating in the country about a billion dollars. I think everybody ought to realize that. I don't think we want to add to the cost of our meals -- of a billion dollars, if we can help it.

Q Mr. President, would you say that was about the best way to start the inflationary system that we have been trying to avoid?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course people are sitting up nights trying to invent new methods of accelerating inflation, and I am sitting up nights trying to block the acceleration of inflation. (laughter) And this is one of the -- one of the plans which would accelerate inflation -- no question.

Q Mr. President, in your reply to the question about non-germane riders, you qualified somewhat your answer to appropriation bills?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that would apply to any other bill too.

Q Any other bill?

THE PRESIDENT: In the constitution of the State of New York, as I remember it -- you had better check on this -- see whether I am right or not, because it is quite a long while since I was Governor -- there is a clause that in effect prevents that. The title of the bill has got to cover everything that is in the bill, which in effect means that if you start to put a rider on it in the Senate or the Assembly in the State of New York, the title of the bill doesn't cover the rider and therefore such -- such a bill would be vetoed by the Governor as unconstitutional. Quite a number of States have a provision of that kind.

Q Well, isn't that to prevent secret legislation? You can amend the title?

THE PRESIDENT: (after a short pause) No. You see -- you see the usual method in the title is "For so and so, and other purposes." Well, that is cut out under the constitution of the State of New York -- "and other purposes."

Q Yes. But what I mean -- you could amend the title to the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: The interesting fact is: in Albany they don't. (laughter) It's pretty strictly lived up to, the intent of having legislation only cover one subject.

Q Would you say then, sir, that legislative ethics in Albany are higher than in Washington? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, because we have it in the constitution at Albany -- the State constitution. They haven't got it in the Constitution of the United States.

Q Mr. President, would you construe the Smith amendment to be that type of a rider not germane to the War Powers bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Again, is that "background"?

THE PRESIDENT: That is still "background." (laughter, and cries of "Oh")

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You can write a nice story.

Q Mr. President, if the bill covers the War Powers of the President, and the President is denied discretionary powers on the 40-hour week, that surely would not be germane to the bill, would it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. I would hate even to make a snap judgment on that.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #809
Executive Office of the President
March 6, 1942, 11.00 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: It was -- this is an effort to do something for the whole Government all over the country, without issuing any more paper work, an Executive Order, or a letter to heads of departments. And I was going to let the newspapers act as the purveyor of the request. The proposal was that I should send out a notice to the heads of all departments, and establishments, and agencies, in regard to saving electricity -- lights -- and instead of spending a lot of money in sending this out, I will let the papers do it.

The idea is this: (reading): "Due to the constantly increasing demands for electrical energy to meet the vital needs of activities throughout the nation, engaged in the prosecution of the war, it is absolutely essential that every kilowatt of such energy be saved wherever it is possible to do so without detriment to our war effort. To this end it is directed -- you can change that -- to this end it is requested that everybody in the Government service take the necessary action to insure, with respect to buildings of every character occupied by the Government, both in Washington and in the field, that the use of electricity for lighting and other purposes be restricted to the minimum usage essential to the efficient operation of the buildings or the activities conducted therein."

And furthermore, I would like to have some reports on this, to see how much can be saved. It is just an essential routine matter but it is a good deal of importance, and I -- I have had, frankly, quite a number of complaints -- letters from people complaining that a Government building that was not working all night has been lighted up all over the place -- unnecessarily. So this is just an effort to save electricity, hereby requesting the cooperation of the Press.

Q Well, Mr. President, how about civilian saving?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about civilian saving?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing exactly.

Q What will that do to night baseball?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What will that do to night baseball?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, after all, there are certain activities connected with the morale of the people of the United States which probably ought to go on. If the people who go to a baseball game at night would turn out all their lights at home, this would be just about the equivalent of using it in the park. Now that is a practical thing. A lot of people, as you know, go out in the evening and leave most of their lights turned on in the house. That is true.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, about night ball games, Mr. Landis spoke recently about blackouts, etcetera -- brought up also by sports writers -- that lighting for baseball would be seen a long ways away, and if the foe did have any idea of doing any bombing, they could pick the night of a night ball game and see from a long ways off.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's true.

Q (continuing) How about that?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little bit on where it is in the country.

Q Do you intend to do anything along that line?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That is a thing that has got to be worked out locally.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, yesterday you sent the House a request for a 100-million-dollars W.P.A. supplemental appropriation for the so-called disemployed. Will you be able to allocate that in specific areas? Will it be enough? I understand W.P.A. is only about 23 dollars -- a share. (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well ---

MR. P. BRANDT: (interposing) I was thinking of Douglas Aircraft. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The answer is that I frankly don't know the details of it, but if I were you, if the price is only 23 dollars, I wouldn't sell it short. (laughter)

MR. P. BRANDT: Well, will it require special legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't -- I don't know, Pete. I haven't looked into it.

MR. P. BRANDT: Have you also worked out -- decided where they will work? In defense housing, or will they be trained ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There are all kinds of things. A lot of it will be retraining to work on new types of tools. Some of it will be defense housing and whatever is most useful in that particular locality.

MR. P. BRANDT: Yes, but it will be used and allocated in specific localities -- like Michigan ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It will be the place where it is needed. We wouldn't put it into a country district that didn't need it.

Q Mr. President, Oliver Lyttleton, the Supervising Minister of Supply in Great Britain, this morning spoke of a new American naval base in Eritrea as being rather small now, but showing every prospect of growing into what he called "quite a whacker." I wonder if you could give us any further information on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. It would be an invitation to bomb it if I did.

Q Isn't that information?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Wouldn't you call that information?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen the story.

Q They let it come through the Censor several times from the other side, sir, and it has been requested that we eliminate it over here.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is sound. Two "wrongs" don't make a "right."

Q Mr. President, the House Military Affairs Committee criticized Donald Nelson for approving the R.E.A. (Rural Electrification Administration) power line to an aluminum plant in Arkansas. Have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Was there any other side presented to the Military Affairs Committee?

Q (aside) Shall I answer that? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It's rather important, isn't it? In other words, did they hear just one side of the case, or both?

Q I understand from some of the Congressmen they only heard one side.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I understood too.

Q Mr. President, the Foreign Minister of Nicaragua (Dr. Arguello) arrived in town this morning, and I wondered if you had any immediate plans to receive him?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably will see him in the course of the next few days.

Q Mr. President, it has been reported that a supply mission -- and perhaps more than that -- is on its way or about to go to India. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will have to ask Sumner Welles about that. There is something in the wind. Whether he is ready to tell you about it or not, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, what is holding up developments along the lines of mobilizing manpower -- civilian manpower for industry?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got anything more on that.

Q The thing is still being studied, is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Still being studied. Hope to get something on it next week.

Q Is there any indication, Mr. President, that it might go into the Department of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, you said in your last (Press) Conference that you had received notice -- some note about that Mount Gilead plan of production. Have you read it since then?

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I have read is the story in the paper, and it looks like a very excellent plan, which of course would have to be fitted in -- probably should be fitted in to meet the needs and the circumstances of the different localities. You couldn't, for example, put any Mount Gilead plan into effect in every part of the country, because all the circumstances are different. And I would like to know very much that the plan which looks good actually gets followed out. That is the proof of the pudding. Too many -- so many communities get out a grand plan which has everybody's approval, and then it sort of doesn't get carried through. Now if this plan is really carried through, it is something that is worth-while carrying through, in principle at least, in a great many other communities.

Q This is said to have the approval of everybody except the local banker. That indicated it is being carried through, I wonder?

THE PRESIDENT: There is always somebody. Not necessarily a banker. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, a new crop of rumors about Cabinet revisions are now being harvested. Have you anything to say about the current report that Mr. Stimson (Secretary of War) is about to step out of the Cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think probably the only comment on that is that I read the story in a certain type of newspaper, and that that is a very good answer. (short pause) Is that too rough? (laughter) That doesn't mean all the Press, by any means.

Q The Associated Press carried that story.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The Associated Press carried that story.

THE PRESIDENT: What? I didn't hear.

Q Associated Press.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it originated with the Associated Press. (laughter)

Q (aside) Let's go. Let's go.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

(the President saw Walter Winchell and beckoned to him)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #810
Executive Office of the President
March 10, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M., E.W.T.

(the President had displayed on his desk a small ship model of the Mayflower, and some specially bound books alongside)

Q New models, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you all about it. It is very interesting.

Q Nice.

(the President held up one of the books to the front row)

Q What rig is that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Bark rig?

THE PRESIDENT: A ship of the period. A sort of development of the caravel, about one hundred feet long, I think.

Q A hundred?

THE PRESIDENT: About that.

Q About a hundred?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In fact, I think it was just under a hundred -- ninety something. And there is enough furniture in New England that came over on the Mayflower to have kept her going from that time on until today. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

MR. EARLY: And furnish all the houses where George Washington spent the night.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's right. (laughter)

I have been given a very delightful thing that is very nice at this time. I will get Steve (Early) to take it out afterwards (holding up the model of the ship, glass encased). A little model of the Mayflower, made out of a piece of the Mayflower.

A number of years ago, some antiquarians discovered that there was an old barn in England that had been built out of such timbers, and it was sufficiently -- they were sufficiently identified to make it seem almost certain that they were made out of the original timbers of the Mayflower when she was broken up. Sent over by Mr. Brendan Bracken, who was Mr. Churchill's secretary, and is now the head of the Ministry of Information in London, and sent over by John Winant (U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain) -- Gil Winant -- who gave it to me yesterday. The piece of wood that it is made out of was furnished by the Society of Friends, who now own the barn. The model was given by Mr. Allen King. Steve will give you the thing afterwards, together with a history (holding up one of the books) of how they discovered where the timbers came from.

Q Is that glass-surrounded?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that glass ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- or mica?

THE PRESIDENT: Glass, Yes.

I have a statement, which was worked out by Steve. He is the author. You will recognize his English -- (laughter) -- I said English -- (more laughter) -- he will give you copies. He states:

> (reading): "Many people have written to the Executive Office asking for some statement of the general attitude of the Federal Government toward the continuation of various sports, dramatics, concerts, vacations and general recreation and amusement during the war effort. Most of these letters point out that the writers are anxious to do their utmost to help in the prosecution of the war and wonder whether such activities are considered to be harmful to the prosecution of the war.

"It is, of course, obvious that the war effort is the primary task of everybody in the nation. All other activities must be considered secondary. At the same time it has been proven beyond much doubt that human beings cannot sustain continued and prolonged work very long, without obtaining a proper balance between work on the one hand and vacation and recreation on the other. Such recreation may come by participation in, or attendance at, various sports, motion pictures, music, the drama, picnics, et cetera. All of them have a necessary and beneficial part in promoting an over-all efficiency by relieving the strains of war and work.

"The actual occurence of very large gatherings, of course, must depend on local safety conditions of the moment.

"Within reasonable limits, I believe the war effort will not be hampered but actually improved by sensible participation in healthy recreational pursuits. It must be borne in mind, however, that 'recreation as usual' is just as bad as 'business as usual'. Recreation under present conditions can be undertaken solely for the purpose of building up body and mind and with the chief thought that this will help win the war."

And of course I can't down here -- nobody down here -- it ought not to be done here -- can make final determination in some specific case. They have got to do the best they can. Not going to set up a bureau in Washington, to tell the people in Poughkeepsie as to whether they ought to have local horse races or not. (laughter)

Q Cocktail parties and tea dances, Mr. President? (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you say whether you plan to ask the more essential industries to forego vacations this year? That was suggested last year. Is it your idea that vacations should be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You can't lay down a general rule for everybody. I can say that if anybody gets very tired they should do what a lot of people do do, and that is take a few days off, not only -- only if they feel they need it. If they think it is going to make them more efficient and turn out more in the way of munitions -- essential industries -- by taking a few days off, it would be common sense to go ahead and do it.

Q So long as the industry itself doesn't slow down?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And of course what we always forget is that things of that kind slow down industry so much less than illness slows down industry. The percentage of people who are out because of illness, in any given plant almost, is much higher than people realize.

Then we have all got a question -- I mean here in Washington -- as to whether -- how we are going to blackout Federal buildings in case of air-raid. So the Director of Civilian Defense wrote a letter, for me to send to Federal Works Agency which is in charge of public buildings, and to the Director of Civilian Defense. I suppose there ought to be a copy go to the Commissioners of the District, although this is primarily Federal buildings. It reads as follows:

> (reading): "Such preparation shall be made as will completely obscure all Federal buildings and non-Federal buildings occupied by the Federal Government during an air-raid for any period of time from visibility by reason of internal or external illumination. Such ---"

I don't know -- this is not my word ---

> "Such obscuration is ---" (loud laughter) ---

Sounds almost like some people's I see before me ---

Q (aside) Oh!

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing reading): "Such obscuration may be obtained either by blackout construction or by terminating the illumination." (laughter)

Q Sounds like ---

Q (interposing) Does that mean turning off the lights? (more laughter)

Q That isn't the one you said Steve (Early) wrote, is it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That isn't the one you said Steve wrote, is it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Steve did not write that. The Dean of the Harvard Law

School wrote this. (more laughter)

(continuing reading): "This will of course require that in building areas in which production must continue during a blackout, construction must be provided that internal illumination may continue."

I have known lots of people that have had internal illumination. (loud and prolonged laughter)

Q (interjecting) Just for a holiday though?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing reading): "Other areas, whether or not occupied by personnel, may be obscured by terminating the illumination. (more laughter)

"The Administrator of the Federal Works Agency is hereby authorized to effect this policy in all Federal buildings and non-Federal buildings occupied by the Federal Government, both in Washington and throughout the country."

Steve?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Rewrite that for me, will you? (laughter) Tell them the buildings will have to keep their work going -- put something across the windows. In buildings that can afford it, so that work can be stopped for a while, turn out the lights and stop there.

I don't think I have got anything else.

Q Mr. President, Senator (A.B.) Chandler (Democrat of Kentucky) said today that he understood the Government was considering seriously the establishment of a supreme command. Is there anything new on that you can tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: Just what does that mean?

Q I don't know, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Neither do I.

Q I assume ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Neither does anybody else that writes about it.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, the impression seems to be widespread that you would say something today on the Sojourner Truth housing project in Detroit -- the race riots out there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I should, even if I wanted to, because as I understand it, the Attorney General is bringing grand jury proceedings. I think you had better ask him, and for that reason, of course, I ought not to comment.

Q Very well. Thanks.

Q Mr. President, it has been printed that Mrs. Roosevelt is considering going to London. Would you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't -- I don't think that even she has heard that rumor.

Q Mr. President, there is a bill up -- introduced this afternoon by Senator (B.C.) Clark (Democrat of Missouri) to the effect that all the Army and the Navy, etcetera, would be -- would be included in one department. That has been brought up before, of course. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard that one. After all, it makes very little difference whether you have them all under one department, or two departments, or three departments, or four departments. They all are working together pretty well.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. -- Mr. President, in that connection, will you comment on the reorganization announced by the Navy Department last night?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is towards simplification. The old Navy method of a Chief of Operations goes back to about 1916, when it superseded what was called the Aide System. As time went on, from the end of the postwar period down to a few years ago, this Chief of Operations -- of course the title was chosen because he was supposed to be the person who was in charge of the movement of ships. And that worked pretty well during the World War. It was rather a much simpler matter than it is today, on the question of moving ships.

And the difficulty has been that since the World War the materiel situation has become, especially in the last two years, of such very great importance that additional duties have been saddled on the Chief of Operations.

And it has been very difficult to draw the line between Operations in the sense of movement of ships, and Operations in the sense of getting the ships ready to move, or supplying them at some distant place. So it seems better to merge the movement of ships, which was put under Admiral King a few months ago -- merge it with the general duties of Operations, and give to the one person a subdivision -- several subdivisions under him, that would handle the different component parts of putting ships to a task, and at the same time providing them with the necessary things to keep them going in any part of the world.

Well, it is a thing that we have been, I suppose, working towards for the last six or eight years. And it seems a logical thing to do. Also centralizes responsibility -- could be called somewhat akin to the recent so called "streamlining" of the War Department.

Q Mr. President, have you had any reports on the "Sea Otter"? (the new type cargo ship)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, a great many.

Q What -- can you tell us in general what she did in actual trials?

THE PRESIDENT: I can tell you in general what the problems were. She -- the ship was about the right size as originally designed, and like so many things it got bigger -- grew -- the tonnage grew. And the original idea was that we could use a small type of ship in coastal trade, down in the West Indies, and down the coast of South America, especially to go into a good many smaller harbors.

But the design carried the original estimated draft of ten feet down about five or six more, which made it difficult for the ship to get into the harbors. The rest of it was somewhat technical, which I will try to translate as easily as I can.

The metacentric height was in the wrong place. There were problems of loading and unloading, which could only be worked out through tests. I don't think they have had enough tests. I think there should be modifications in the design. It might be possible to use the same gasoline engine propulsion instead of a Diesel engine. Carry the screw out through the stern, instead of down through the bottom of the ship, thereby solving the draft problem, which is a thing that I think should be pursued further.

The first ship was not satisfactory, but there is a great deal of merit in the basic idea of building a very cheap hull in a very few months, and try to work out the kinks that developed in the first model. That's about all there is.

Q Mr. President, is there any problem connected with the relative bulk of gasoline in Diesel oil engines?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on the length of the voyage, and to where the voyage goes. If the voyage goes to places where gasoline is reasonably available, I don't think it makes much difference.

Q Mr. President, it was reported from Russian sources, printed in Europe this morning, that several units of the French fleet had been turned over by the Vichy government to Germany. Have you anything to substantiate that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Never heard of it.

Q Can you tell us, sir anything about Admiral Hart's call today?

THE PRESIDENT: We had a very satisfactory talk, and I am going to see him again.

Q Is his status ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Quite a lot of information.

Q Would you clarify what his status is, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is he to get another ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) We haven't talked about it at all.

Q (aside) All right? All right?

THE PRESIDENT: Going?

VOICES: (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #811
Executive Office of the President
March 13, 1942 -- 11.00 A.M., E.W.T.

Q Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

Q Are you going to give us a book review this morning? (referring to Marquis W. Childs' book "This Is Your War" lying on his desk)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you going to give us a book review this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I just got it. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: There is very little this morning.

I signed last night the Executive Order that carries into effect the change of certain command details in the Navy Department. It combines certain duties of the Commander in Chief, United States Fleet with the duties of Chief of Naval Operations -- one person in charge of the whole thing. And his title is: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, and Chief of Naval Operations. He shall be the principal naval adviser to the President on the conduct of the war, and principal naval adviser and executive to the Secretary of the Navy on the conduct of the activities of the Naval Establishment. He has supreme command of the operating forces comprising the several fleets, seagoing forces, and sea frontier forces of the United States Navy, and is directly responsible under the general direction of the Secretary (of the Navy), to the President.

The staff of the Commander in Chief of -- to be composed of first, a Chief of Staff, who in the temporary absence or incapacity of the Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, and Chief of Naval Operations, shall act as Commander in Chief of the United States Fleet -- in other words, the operating portion of the -- of Admiral King's duties -- and such assistants and heads as are necessary.

Then he has, on the naval operations end, another officer who would be the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, who in the absence of Admiral King would handle that portion of his work as Acting Chief of Naval Operations. I think that's about all there is. Steve has got it for you.

Q Mr. President, have the Chief of Staff and the Vice Chief of Naval Operations been named?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, wait a minute. (turning to Captain McCrea) I don't think so. I don't think so. I think no one ---

CAPTAIN McCREA: They haven't been announced, but I think Admiral King ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Then, on the problem of "obscuration of illumination" -- (laughter) -- with which you are familiar, we have rewritten it, and made it worse -- (more laughter) -- because we have added to the problem of illumination the question of the safety of buildings in Washington.

And there have been quite a number of incidents of late, some of which you are aware of, and some of which you are not aware of and won't be, if we can help it. There were -- there were -- there were -- I won't say sabotage, but certain incidents which lead us to believe that sabotage might be tried on Government buildings, both here in Washington and elsewhere around the country.

So this letter from the Director of the Budget to me -- it is a memorandum -- points out that we have not only the problem of blacking out but we also have the problem of safeguarding public buildings from subversive acts. And the rewritten letter to Colonel Fleming takes --

gives directions in regard to the blackout, but we are also working on the question of safety.

And it seems like an appalling amount, but after all, when you are -- if you visualize the size of the effort to win the war here in public buildings, and elsewhere in public buildings, the total estimated cost for both of the items -- the blackout and the safety -- is 18 million dollars. So there will be a -- some kind of a supplementary estimate go to Congress to take care of some -- some -- something like that.

Q Mr. President, that 18 million covers the whole of the country?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That 18 million covers the whole country?

THE PRESIDENT: The whole country, Yes. Yes.

Q Is the problem internal guarding against sabotage? Additional guard details?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know the details. It costs money. I think that is about all I have got.

Q Mr. President, this applies simply to Federal buildings, not buildings of any sort?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, one of the morning papers states that you are in favor of the erection of a -- a series of dormitories on the Mall? They had considerable detail on it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it is substantially correct, unless somebody can point out some other vacant land where we don't have to cut down trees, where Government workers in the main section of Washington can walk to and from their -- their work. I don't know of any other place besides the Mall.

Q Was the description of the buildings substantially correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Also substantially correct.

Q Was the expression of your views substantially correct too, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter) In fact, I told it to Ernie (Ernest Lindley, writer of the story) after you fellows left the other day -- one or two people were left behind -- and I gave him a scoop. (laughter)

Q (aside) Gee.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) He was not the only one. There were several others. Of course the point of it -- point of it is that -- I might as well go into it, somebody will probably ask me another question -- it's part and parcel of the problem of winning the war, to provide adequate housing for the thousands of people that have come in, and are coming in.

And there are stories which have come to me from young men and young women who have come down to Washington about their -- their difficulties, their real hardships in finding adequate places to live here at reasonable cost. I don't think people in Washington -- because you are so close to the trees, you don't see the forest just because of the trees -- but the fact remains that there is very great hardship, a great deal of financial hardship.

I know of -- Oh -- four or five top people in the Government who have gone down into their own pockets to tide over the financial problems of some of these young men and young women who have come here with a small sum of 50 dollars or 100 dollars, who completely run out of money. And these people have given them personal loans -- probably get them back. But that condition ought not to exist, to have to go to some higher paid official of the Government and borrow money, in order to live. And I have said -- it is just one of those things -- the Government is awfully big.

I have been talking for a year about very simple, and also cheap, accommodations for these single persons. And it just -- it didn't get done. It wasn't anybody's "child." Or if it was referred to some so-called expert, they wanted to add to the luxury of the accommodations, and give everybody a separate bathroom, or a separate kitchenette, or a sitting room, or something like that, at an impossible price -- way beyond the means of the individual.

And I still hope that we can go into the dormitory system. Try it out. Two or three buildings here. If it works, we may or we may not have to build some more. Now, if there is any place that is better than the Mall, somebody tell me.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And in the same way, that ties in with this other problem that I was talking to you -- you have had various newspaper campaigns around Washington -- the problem of information -- people coming in here all the time to take new jobs. Well, I suppose just on what you might call shoe leather alone, if we could have some center of information for them to go to, instead of pounding the pavements trying to find out a third-class boarding house when they first come in, I suppose the amount of shoe leather saved would pay for the cost of the buildings just about. In other words, financially it seems pretty sound. I am not putting in any cost of mental strain or anything like that. I think you might put in, however, the waste of time to existing Government employees of people rushing in and saying, "My God, I have nowhere to sleep tonight."

Well, that -- that comes right down from the President of the United

States down to every officer in the Government, pretty nearly. They have all got cases of that kind. I know of two or three cases where at eleven o'clock at night there wasn't any place for them to go. You know the hotels are filled, even with the giving-up of the D.A.R. convention. And having a central place for these individuals to go to we hope will be the decent thing -- the right thing to do -- help them.

Q Mr. President, do you have any definite plans in mind for starting construction of some of the dormitories?

THE PRESIDENT: Starting some what?

Q Towards getting construction started on the dormitory system?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am talking with Jack Blandford (National Housing Administrator) about it today or tomorrow.

Q Mr. President, do you have anything definite in mind about taking care of this problem of "Information"?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I thought that was quite obvious. (laughter)

Q I understood that was the brainchild of Mr. (Lowell) Mellett (Office of Government Reports)?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Nothing to do with it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It was mine.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, don't we ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Might just as well say it was mine.

Q (interposing) The Washington Post hasn't admitted ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I would just as soon they do. They can admit it. It's all right. My shoulders are quite broad.

Q Don't we have a defense housing information agency right across Pennsylvania Avenue?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody knows where it is.

Well now, here is a practical illustration. A fellow came in to Washington about two weeks ago -- and mind you I have had not dozens, but hundreds of letters of complaint. And what we are trying to do is run this war effort with the least waste of time and money. And this is going to save money ten times over, at least.

And if, when it is built -- this is another consideration that nobody has thought of, or rather put down on paper -- if the thing is built and started, and it doesn't prove necessary, it's being done in good faith. If it doesn't prove necessary, we have got already at least ten applicants for the space -- war work -- at least ten.

Well, this particular illustration -- the fellow who came down, he makes -- well, I won't tell you exactly what he makes -- what shall I call it? -- tiles. You know what tiles are. What are tiles? Who are tiles used by in the Government? Probably 15 or 20 different departments or agencies. And at the end of one week he came up to me and his collar was wilted, shoes were worn out, and he said: "I have had one week of run-around. I have been given the run-around for one solid week." Well, actually, he hadn't been given the run-around, except that he had gone, in the course of that week, to 15 or 20 different departments to find out if -- if they needed tiles. Well, tiles are a sort of thing that you can't centralize. You can procure, Yes. But in time of war there are any number of persons on a very small scale -- this fellow had a small plant -- he only employed 25 men.

Now the idea is to have a man like that -- you have all talked about little business -- little business. Why hasn't the Government done anything about little business? Why there are thousands of little business men who come down here -- have worn out their shoes. All right. Now the idea is that a man coming down -- little business -- would go to a central place, and say to somebody at the desk, "I want to sell some tiles." Or, "I want to use my shop for making something that I can make, even if it isn't tiles, for the Government -- for the war." And at the front desk the man looks it up and says, "All right. Tiles -- Room 101." Well, that's practical. He gives him a card. He goes to see the man in room number -- or the girl in room number 101.

Now he doesn't get the run-around, and he doesn't get referred to somebody else. He is getting somebody that knows just where to go for tiles, and that person cleans him up in one day. That individual gets service. Well, why should -- any private organization of course would do it. Why shouldn't the Government? That's service.

And then there is just a third crowd of people. You have got all the people coming in for work. You have got people coming in for small contracts. And you have also got another element -- you can ask Mac (Marvin H. McIntyre) about it, because I always turn those things over to him. There are a very large number -- number of Members of Congress -- Senate and their secretarial staffs, who get a letter. Well, they are pretty good -- they are very efficient people. Well, the letter presents a new problem, and the secretary to the Congressman says, "My God, that's a new one on me." And in a war there are thousands of new ones all the time. It's from a constituent of the Congressman. He says, "I don't know where to go for that." And instead of telephoning to half a dozen places, he telephones to somebody at "Information," and is told where to go. Or is told, "Send the fellow down here. Write to the man to come here. We can straighten him out inside of 24 hours."

And if -- as I say, the thing -- the thing is justified by the -- by the letters of complaint on the existing problem, and by the personal calls: "I don't know where to go." And if it doesn't work, we will use it for any one of a dozen -- ten or a dozen Federal agencies that are yelling for space.

Q Mr. President, have you arrived at any opinion on how well the Canadian system of wage control would work in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't got any news on it, because the whole -- that is only one out of many factors in this whole problem, which is being studied at the present time.

Q Can you tell us, sir, whether you participated in the discussions at the White House last Sunday, which Mrs. Roosevelt described in her conference -- in her column on Tuesday ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- about wage control?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No. I did not. No.

Q (continuing) She advocated a general, over-all ceiling on prices, wages, and profits. She said she had become convinced by these discussions that you couldn't control one without controlling all three?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is another factor that has been under study for some time.

Q Are you considering any positive action in the direction of wage control, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Under study.

Q Mr. President, do you feel that progress is being made on the matter of controlling inflation?

THE PRESIDENT: In some ways, Yes. In other ways, No. For example, the vote in the House of Representatives was the "No" side of it. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, you have a book in front of you there, from Marquis Childs. (This Is Your War) There is a line in that book that stuck in my craw last night: that this was a war of peoples and not a war of armies.

THE PRESIDENT: That's absolutely right. I just got it, and I haven't read it yet, but I read the inside of the cover, which I think says that -- starts off with, "No American man, woman or child can escape the consequences of this war. No other national effort in our history has required so much from each of us in sacrifice and effort. Every single aspect of your daily standard of living is going to be affected. Some of these changes you have already learned about from the newspapers. Here is a complete and authoritative discussion of the shape of things to come. Mr. Childs discusses household equipment, transportation, clothes, food, health, children, personal service, and money."

And then the last sentence -- paragraph -- is pretty good: "A pampered nation in the past, America is inexperienced in war. What the country needs is the practical energy of every citizen. This is your war." Right.

Q The point he makes there in -- I have forgotten what he is discussing -- but to me it's no longer a war of the army or navy as such. Everybody's in.

Q No. It's everybody.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you received a recommendation from the War Production Board yet for the mobilization of manpower, and channeling of manpower into the defense industries?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is -- that is under study. It has been for about

-- what? -- three weeks?

Q For about two months.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Two months, I think.

Q Are we now moving to a point where we may expect something on that question?

THE PRESIDENT: I think things are coming to a head.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, Mr. Casey (Richard G. Casey, Minister from Australia), I understand, brought a message from Mr. Curtin (Prime Minister John Curtin) of Australia yesterday and the news reports from Canberra say that they are eagerly expecting an answer. Have you any comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: The matter is under study. I can't tell you any more than that. I wish I could.

Q Mr. President, on that point that this is a war of peoples rather than armies, do you think that there could be a greater concentration of effort on the main problem among various political groups and newspapers?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Very distinctly. I would say it was about time for a large number of people -- several of whom are in this room -- to forget politics. It's about time. We read altogether too much politics in our papers altogether. Of course, they are still thinking in terms of the past. They haven't waked up to the fact that this is a war. Politics is out. Same thing is true in Congress. (laughter)

Q Does that include Members of the Cabinet too, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I -- I think it's not true in regard to the Cabinet. I don't find many instances of any political implications and actions taken by Members of the Cabinet. Wherever I see any implication of that kind I step on it with both feet. It is pretty rare.

Q Mr. President, can you -- speaking of politics, Mr. Frank Walker, Postmaster General, has been taking part in a number of huddles with Pennsylvania Democrats on the governorship situation. Is he acting for you?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say that was a Pennsylvania matter, isn't it?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Where does he come from?

Q I believe his legal residence is Scranton.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q He is not acting for you?

THE PRESIDENT: I know absolutely nothing about it, and an implication that I did would not -- well, that would be politics on the part of the writer. (laughter)

Q Thank you ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

MR. MARQUIS CHILDS: (who came over to the President) Thank you, Mr. President. That's the best book review I have ever had in my life. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #812
Executive Office of the President
March 17, 1942 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

(today was St. Patrick's Day)

Q How are you, Mr. President?

Q What's all that stuff? (a display of shamrocks on the President's desk)

Q What stuff?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got quite a lot of things, and I will start with those in lighter vein and come to the more serious things later.

You know, the only -- the only thing that overburdens my shoulders, I being popularly supposed to be overburdened, are some of the dear, "happy thought" people, commentators and editors -- not you news people -- who bring in hundreds of letters to me just because of some slip of the pen. I suppose I have got two or three hundred letters because of an editorial in one of our more solemn papers, which talked about: (reading): "Now that Admiral King has been given authority in the Navy comparable with those already held by General Marshall in the Army, it should create a joint general staff in charge of the duty of directing, under the President, all naval and military operations."

Well, it has been a perfect headache. It must have taken a couple of hours of my time in answering letters that were based on that completely false statement. Because, of course, we have had a joint staff for a good long time, not once a week, or something like that, but several times a day. And lots of things that come up -- well, I figured it out, being of an historical turn of mind, that probably some poor devil had gone through this process of annoyance in past years, some previous time in history, so I went quite far back and I found a very nice thing -- I told Steve (Early) to mimeograph it, and he will give it to you afterwards -- because we do -- we do need to restore our sense of proportion sometimes.

I think this comes from Book 44, Chapter 22, of a great historian by the name of Livy, who wrote about Lucius Aemilius, a Roman Consul who had been selected to conduct the war with the Macedonians, B.C. 168. That's not A.D. -- that would be an entirely different matter. This is B.C. -- 168. He went out from the Senate House into the Assembly of the people and addressed them as follows -- it sounds as if it were written in 1942:

> (reading): "In all public places where people congregate, and actually -- would you believe it! -- in private parties ---"

Doesn't that sound just like Washington? (laughter) --

> "---there are men---"

-- of course today could be added women --

> "---who know who are leading the armies into Macedonia, where their camps ought to be placed, what strategical positions ought to be occupied, when and by what pass Macedonia ought to be entered, where the magazines are to be formed, by what mode of land and sea transport ---"

-- and to that we might add today air --

> "---supplies are to be conveyed, when actions are to be fought, and when it is better to remain inactive. And they not only lay down what ought to be done, but when anything is done contrary to their opinion they arraign the consul as though he were being impeached before the Assembly.
>
> "This greatly interferes with the successful prosecution of a war, for it is not everybody who can show such firmness and resolution in the teeth of hostile criticism as Fabius did; he preferred to have his authority weakened by the ignorance and caprice of the people rather than gain popularity by disservice to the State.
>
> "I am not one of those who think that generals are not to

> be advised; on the contrary, the man who always acts on his own initiative shows, in my judgment, more arrogance than wisdom. How then does the case stand? Commanders ought first of all to get the advice of thoughtful and far-seeing men who have special experience of military affairs; then from those who are taking part in the operations, who know the country and recognize a favourable opportunity when it comes, who, like comrades on a voyage, share the same dangers.
>
> "If, then, there is any man who in the interests of the commonwealth feels confident that he can give me good advice in the war which I am to conduct, let him not refuse to help his country, but go with me to Macedonia. I will supply him with a ship, a horse, a tent, and with his travelling expenses as well. If anyone thinks this is too much trouble, let him not try to act as a sea pilot whilst he is on land." (laughter)

Isn't that a classic? (more laughter)

> "The city itself affords plenty of subjects for conversation, let him confine his loquacity to these; he may rest assured that the discussions in our councils of war will satisfy us."

I think it is rather nice. I think that ought to be printed. Be sure you make it B.C., not A.D. -- 168.

Well, to come down to more serious things than that, I am sending up tomorrow a supplemental estimate for the War Department, a little over 17 billion dollars -- 17 billion, 579 million, 311 thousand, 253 period. That is for -- I think all of it -- for planes. And the Budget Director tells me that the -- out of the total -- the total program of 60 thousand airplanes in 1942, and 125 thousand in 1943, the Army is charged with the -- financially -- with the procurement of 148 thousand. This supplemental estimate will take care, with previous appropriations, of 148 thousand planes in those two years, leaving 23,550 to be financed in a program to be submitted within the next 6 weeks.

Q I beg your pardon, Mr. President. Is the Army still to get another 23,500 planes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, could you say how many planes exactly the 17 billion will provide? That is out of the 148 thousand?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this -- this 17 billion provides for 148 thousand minus 23,500, you see.

Q Then this -- you spoke though of the previous appropriations? Would they take care ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, because some of the program -- this year's -- this year's 60 thousand, for example, the Army's share on that has already been financed by existing appropriations.

Q Could you narrow what the 17 million will buy?

THE PRESIDENT: 17 billion.

Q 17 billion, excuse me.

THE PRESIDENT: It will buy the difference between what already has been appropriated for, and one hundred -- let's see, I will do a little figuring---

Q (interjecting) 124 thousand?

THE PRESIDENT: 124 thousand -- and the difference between those two. And there is still 23 thousand to be financed.

Then you have read the good news about General (Douglas) MacArthur. And I got down this, and I am going to give it out to you. I think you might as well quote it, or get Steve to give you a copy.

There will be, of course, immediately -- we all know that -- because we are accustomed to that sort of thing -- there is going to be Axis propaganda that will appear this afternoon on their short-wave, and tomorrow morning, about how this is the abandonment of the Philippines, and that General MacArthur's leaving the Philippines is nothing more than another Van Mook having to get out of Java, etcetera. And of course we know what they will say.

On the other side of the picture, put it this way:

(reading): "I know that every man and woman in the United States admires with me General MacArthur's determination to fight to the finish with his men in the Philippines. But I also know that every man and woman is in agreement that all important decisions must be made with a view toward the successful termination of the war. Knowing this, I am sure that every American, if faced individually with the question as to where General MacArthur could best serve his country, could come to only one answer."

In other words, he will be more useful in Supreme Command of the whole Southwest Pacific than if he had stayed in Bataan Peninsula, where of course the fighting is going on.

Oh -- one other thing. I asked the Secretary of War, and he saw no reason why it shouldn't -- I shouldn't tell you this afternoon. This morning there arrived in Honolulu High Commissioner Frank (Francis) Sayre, who has been directed to come back here to report to me, and to the Chief of Staff, Chief of Naval Operations, and having done so and cleaned up various matters, he will in all probability return, as soon as he can, to the Southwest Pacific area.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Back to report, and then return.

Q In the area of Australia and that general area, are naval operations and air operations also under General MacArthur?

THE PRESIDENT: The whole thing.

Q Yes. I wanted to clear that.

Q Could you tell us, Mr. President, just how much that area includes? Does it include India, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it included everything this side of Singapore.

Q New Zealand, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q New Zealand, sir?

11

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's this side of Singapore.

Q They don't like to be associated with Australia.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, did you have something more you wanted to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I don't think so.

Q (continuing) Well, could you clear up then, sir, what was discussed and what was agreed on in this conference of the labor people today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, perfectly well, because I think that some of you people need a little clarification in words, and perhaps some of the people who are not here need a little clarification in words, because we don't want to give, I am sure -- any one of us wants to give the country a false impression.

We talked about certain false impressions. Well, for example, I have had -- I have had four -- I have had five letters in the past week from editors of small papers in different parts of the country -- I happen to know all four of them -- they are grand people -- and they asked me why it was -- mind you, they had got their information from reading the papers in small towns -- and they asked me why it was that nobody was allowed by law to work more than 40 hours a week.

Now of course you and I know differently, but they had received that impression either from things they had read, or in speeches they had heard in the Congress and elsewhere, and wanted to know why people weren't allowed to work more than 40 hours a week.

Well, that is an amazing -- amazing state of public misinformation. Of course we all know that in most of the munitions -- anywhere at all there is no limit to 40 hours a week -- never has been. Plain never has been. We also know that in most of the munitions plants, I think almost all of them, they are working a great deal more than 40 hours a week. On some plants that -- a few plants are working 40 hours, and some are working 30 hours, some are working 20 hours a week. Why? The approximate cause is because the materials are not coming into the plant to work on. I think it is a fair thing to point out the whole story, and not a part of the story.

Now there has been a rule in this country for a great many years. It has been almost -- almost, you might say, a national standard in industrial plants, and that is that you pay for more than 40 hours a week. You don't restrict it to that. You pay time and a half for overtime. Well, we talked about that, and we talked about the desirability of having that known through the whole country, just that simple fact, on which there is a good deal of misinformation.

Then there was another question that we talked about, which I -- I haven't agreed with some of the labor leaders on at all, and that is that there should be double pay for Sunday. But on the other hand, that we should try to do two things as a national policy. The first is to stagger the days of work, so that we would have a six-day week; and let people off for one day a week, not necessarily Sunday -- No -- but one day a week. That means that you get Sunday operation of a plant.

However -- however, to work out there must be some term for it. I don't know what it is. Suppose you want to work 7 days a week. I am just -- the only way I can discuss it is this way: One-sixth or one-seventh -- well, one-sixth of the force would take Sunday off. One-sixth -- I guess it would be one-seventh would take Sunday off. One-seventh would take Monday off. One-seventh would take Tuesday off, and so on through the week. Well, you get a thing which has been the law of the land in almost every State. I think it was my bill when I was in the State senate (of New York), and I got it through -- the "One Day Rest In Seven" bill -- very strongly backed by almost everybody in this country, the "One Day Rest In Seven."

Now we ought to keep it up, but we want to keep the plants open every day in the week. You can do it by staggering the shifts. It is a practical thing to do. And so I said let's forget about this double time for Sundays.

And I told them an amusing story: that I was talking to a Britisher -- they have been plagued a good deal by it -- by that rule, and they are getting away from it. They have had the double pay for Sundays over there, with the net result, in some plants, that a great many more people reported on Sundays than any other day in the week. See how it works?

So the idea is that we could continue, as has been the custom in Britain and here for a great many years, to pay double time for the seventh consecutive day of work, but to try not to have a seventh consecutive day of work, except in some emergency we have to get some particular job out in a hurry.

Q They have agreed to that part?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q They have agreed to that part?

THE PRESIDENT: That was my suggestion.

Q But they agreed to do it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, silence sometimes gives consent. I think they will take it. (laughter)

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, they have contracts on these -- double pay is usually covered by contract ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) How would they ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I should say this, Pete. I should say that the thing would probably work out, and possibly with the aid of the National Labor Board. In other words, in some contracts there are certain inequalities both ways -- both ways. The thing can be worked out. That is a detail which the Board, which has only been in existence only -- what? -- two or three months since the war, is handling pretty well at the present time.

Just the same way with strikes. Oh, I should say this: there are probably, today, fewer men on strike in the United States than there are anywhere else in the world, unless they are regimented, like Germany.

Q Mr. President, to restate that, as I understand it, this proposition would give straight time for 5 days, and time-and-a-half for the 6th day?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am talking about 40 hours. I am not talking about the 5th day, or anything else -- 40 hours.

Q Five days of eight hours each?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. I don't care how they do it. Lots of other things ---

Q (interjecting) That is true.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) A piece of paper will show you.

Q Another thing, Mr. President. You said a few minutes ago there was an amazing state of public misinformation about that. I wonder if we could put quotes around that phrase?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's all right. Well now, for instance, you know the number of people that have been on strike -- Oh, I saw in one of the -- I think one of the press association stories, some little bit of a two-by-four place that frankly I had never heard of before -- 15 men went out. Well it made all the metropolitan dailies in this country. That's the kind of thing that I call creating misinformation.

Q What were they making in those plants?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What were they making in those plants?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I haven't the faintest idea.

Q That might be important?

THE PRESIDENT: They may have been baking bread for the soldiers, or some cake, for all I know. I don't think that makes an awful lot of difference, because you can't take a list of things that are absolutely essential. If you did that you would have to list them in about 24 categories, and in priorities of essentiality. You can't do it. I mean it will just become a stunt that wouldn't be quite fair.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Do you think that any repressive legislation -- any anti-strike ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, there is one thing really -- I always have to check a little -- I don't know whether it's his language or not -- it doesn't sound like his language. What Bill Green said seems to be quoted here in accordance with what happened, but the quote from Phil Murray, we didn't talk about. That's the real answer.

Q What part of that are you referring to?

THE PRESIDENT: This: C.I.O. President (Philip) Murray said -- had agreed that voluntary action by labor to yield its right to strike was a much more satisfactory answer to the problem of production, of national unity, than resort to restrictive enactments by Congress. Well, the question of strike did not come up, in this sense: that there is no strike problem today. Now that is the big fact. With that -- that was mentioned -- no agreement was necessary on it, because it is a fact.

Q May we quote that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You will have me quoting all over the place.

Practically speaking, there are no strikes today. In England -- let's go back and do a little analogy work -- in England, labor agreed two years ago not to strike. I think it was just about the same period after they got into the war as it was over here after we got into the war. And they agreed not to strike.

Now they haven't struck except this: that those 15 men making loaves of bread for somebody have gone on strike in -- I don't know, what? -- dozens of localities -- one today -- one tomorrow. And I suppose in England there are -- Oh, what? -- four or five little local strikes. They don't like the foreman, and they walk out -- that sort of thing. It's against the orders of the top unions, just as it is here -- exactly. But you get 15 or 20 people who don't like the kind of tobacco that a foreman smokes. They don't like the smell of it. Well, they might go on strike to make him change his brand of smoking tobacco. Now things like that have happened, not only in England but over here. Silly little things. They really don't affect the war effort nearly as much as lots of other things.

Just by way of illustration, I think it probably is true, as I wrote to one of my professional economist friends the other day, he told me that since the -- our war effort began -- I don't know what it was -- beginning June, 1940, something terrible had happened. We had lost 30 million man days of work through strikes in a year and three quarters -- well, I didn't check, but assumed he was right -- that if we hadn't lost that 30 million man hours of work in a year and three quarters, Japan never would have declared war on us. We never would have lost the Philippines, or the Dutch Indies, or Singapore. And the dear fellow wrote to me really honestly believing it.

And I wrote him back: I have got something almost more serious to tell you about. This is bad enough what you say, but do you realize that if it hadn't been for the common cold in America today, we would be in Berlin? (laughter) We would be in Berlin today if it hadn't been for the common cold, because there were 60 million man days lost in that same period through common colds.

In other words, why don't we in this country get a little sense of proportion and think things through? Well, headlines are responsible for it. Irresponsible people are responsible for it. Somebody has got to write a good lead. I know -- I would like to myself, but let us keep a little sense of proportion.

Now on this -- on some of these other things -- what we did talk about part of it I was saying -- we talked about the fact practically that there were no strikes at present. Secondly, that labor has agreed not to strike, and that we have machinery -- now that is terribly important -- fairly new machinery -- we have been at war 90 days, and yet this present Labor Board -- I have forgotten the exact date -- was set up around December some time.

Q (interjecting) Late -- in the middle of January, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Along there, Yes. And it seems to be working pretty well.

Q Do you think, sir, then, that we don't need legislation on the question now?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, there is some legislation we might need in time, but let us -- don't let us rush things when they are going pretty well.

Q (interposing) Did you discuss ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I would rather, for example, I would rather see a few more parades in this country. I would rather have a few more bands playing.

Q Why can't we, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Why can't we?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we ought to. You can say that I believe it is time for us to wave the flag and get a little more enthusiasm into this. Now there is one thing that some delightful people think can be done. A fellow goes to work, and there are a lot of us who work day by day, and we don't work awfully hard. We sometimes get slack, and we turn out about three-quarters of what we ought to turn out, if we had a little bit more enthusiasm in our work. I think we need more enthusiasm in our work.

And incidentally, Congress can't pass a law to make a man turn out more work in a given time. That is up to the man and not the law.

Gosh, I have given you people enough to write about for a week. (laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. F. PERKINS: (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Nothing on the manpower case?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. F. PERKINS: Are questions barred now?

Q Everything is over.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: They all tell you "No."

MR. F. PERKINS: (continuing) I have a question dealing with one State only, that the press association men are probably interested in. Last Friday, you talked about politics a while, and the need for adjourning politics, and that you thought that your Cabinet members were obeying that doctrine. Senator Guffey, who is one of your supporters, makes the charge that Attorney General Biddle is up to his neck, I quote, in Pennsylvania politics, and he makes certain other charges along that line. Would you care to comment on what Senator Guffey has to say?

THE PRESIDENT: Cy (Fred Perkins), I can't comment on any of those things, because I don't know. I haven't got the foggiest idea. I think he is in -- from Pennsylvania, and I think Biddle is too.

Q Mr. President, I think that would be cleared up very quickly if you would tell us whether you have a candidate?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you a candidate?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Don't know anything about it.

(Notebooks VII-PC - page 184-192, and
VIII-PC - page 1 to 12 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #813
Executive Office of the President
March 20, 1942 -- 10.55 A.M.,E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have something you were asking about. I just got a telegram this morning, from Mr. (George) McNear, president of the Toledo, Peoria and Western Railroad, saying that he forwarded by air mail a letter to me last night. And it hasn't come in yet -- to be in shortly.

And I signed this morning a Proclamation for Army Day -- April 6. Remember last fall we -- we brought into Navy Day -- we brought all the Armed Forces in. And this Army Day will bring all the Armed Forces in also. And Steve (Early) will give you a copy of it. And I think I may boil it down this afternoon and have some short statement, perhaps a little less formal than the Proclamation.

Wayne Coy suggests that I say a word about a thing that last August I issued a Proclamation on, asking an intensified campaign against accidents, and especially the campaign that is being directed by the National Safety Council. They are now taking an active lead in that work.

They call attention, very properly, to the very large number of people in work of all kinds that are being laid up -- hurt -- by industrial accidents. Of course it is perfectly obvious that when you bring in a great many -- good many millions of people into work which they have never done before, you are bound to have an increase in industrial accidents.

The increase in 1941 over 1940 was five percent. Well, that is understandable, but we want to cut down on that all we possibly can because of the total number of man-hours and man-days that are lost through industrial accidents of various kinds. And we need more care on the part of the worker, and more care on the part of the company in putting safety devices onto machine tools of various kinds. The total number of the -- of man-days a year that are lost through industrial accidents is very, very high. This brochure that they are getting out says that one out of every 14 persons suffered a disabling injury of some kind. That doesn't mean permanent disablement.

I was -- I think I was telling you, by way of a little comparison the other day, the number of people who suffer from common colds and lose working hours and working days. I was way low. If you take it in the -- from the larger point of view, the real figures -- including in common colds all kinds of respiratory troubles all the way to pneumonia -- about 160 million man-days were lost a year. That again, I wish we could cut down on. The total number of hours lost through strikes is about 30 million, so that is a good deal higher than what I said the other day.

Q This is man-hours, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Man-days.

Q Man-days?

THE PRESIDENT: Man-days.

Q What was the figure again, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: About 160 -- all kinds of respiratory troubles, which would include the common cold, because most of them start with the common cold. About 160.

Q Mr. President, could you give us the number of man-days due to industrial accidents?

THE PRESIDENT: I have -- wait a minute -- see if I can find it here. 460 million.

Q In 1941?

Q Per year?

THE PRESIDENT: In 1941. What?

Q Man-days?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- productive man-days were lost. Well, that is 460 million from industrial accidents, and about 160 million from colds and respiratory diseases, and about 30 million from strikes.

Q Are those included in the 460?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. Oh, No.

Q Not in that 460. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: And there are some other pretty startling figures in here. I may be breaking this before they are ready to give it out, but it's all right. 101,500 people were killed. 350,000 were permanently disabled.

Q Is that in 1941?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That is industrial accidents only. And industrial accidents were the first cause of death among all males from 21 to 44 years of age. 11 persons were killed and 40 were permanently disabled by accidents, every hour.

Q What was that last figure again, Mr. President?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) 11 were killed and ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) 11 were killed and 40 permanently disabled by accidents every hour. It is something that is -- that is pretty serious. And I hope if everybody thinks about it, it may be improved. Very largely a question of not letting your mind wander off to other things when you are crossing the street -- things like that.

Q Is there any great breakdown, Mr. President, as between defense and non-defense industries?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's the whole thing. That's the whole country. I suppose it probably would be about the same average, roughly.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now, I had -- Oh, if you want any more of that stuff to get sufficient detail -- Donald Nelson wrote me a letter in which he pointed out the average hours worked per man per week.

Here are a lot of things -- don't know whether you want any of them: Blast furnaces 39.8, that being 4 shifts per day to keep the blast furnaces running right straight through. Foundry and machine shop products 46.9 hours. Electrical machinery 45.4 hours. Smelting and refining of copper, lead and zinc 39.6. That is another one that is on a 4 -- 4-shift basis, because you keep the smelter running right along -- don't let it cool off. Brass, bronze and copper products 46.1. Aluminum manufactures 45.9. Machine tools 55 hours. Aircraft frames 48.7. Shipbuilding 48.2. Explosives 44.9. Engines of all kinds, turbines, airplane engines, etcetera. 51.1.

And then on the second page he has another column there that takes individual plants. In aluminum, for instance, one plant 58.2. Ammunition 66.1. I don't believe you want all this -- they are way up in the sixties. In one plant of machine tools men are working 77 hours a week, which from thehuman point of view I would say was a bit too much. I don't believe any of us work 77 hours a week.

Q Are those figures current, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes, right up to date -- February. It is the February survey.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President, have you heard about the Bethlehem shipyards in San Francisco, where all the men want to work free on a Sunday?

THE PRESIDENT: I only heard about it ten minutes ago, and I think it is a grand thing.

Q They are circulating petitions.

THE PRESIDENT: I think Mr. -- Mr. -- Admiral Vickery and Mr. Nelson -- several people have already commended them for it.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make on Mr. Wilson's (C.E. Wilson, president of General Motors) suggestion that General Motors labor contract negotiations be held with reporters present so that the public can be informed?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any comment. I never heard of it.

Q It was in all the papers this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything else in here, except details. I think that's all I have got.

Q Would you care to draw any conclusion from those figures, sir?

(the President's reply was negative)

Q Mr. President, there have been two stories from Australia, I believe, about General MacArthur's general plans for an offensive, or offensive action, and relief of the Philippines perhaps. Is there anything you could say that would not transgress the strategic bounds on that problem?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except to say that of course we are doing everything that we possibly can, and others. Once more it's the little old lesson in geography. In getting anything from the United States out there it takes an awfully long time. And as you all know, in the whole world there is a very great shortage of shipping. Every effort is being made.

I thought you were going to ask me about how he got out. Well, we had a few people in for supper the other night, and one charming lady -- this was the day that it had been announced that Douglas MacArthur had got there -- and she said, "Oh, Mr. President, tell me how he got there."

So I told her just how he got there, and she really believed it! (laughter)

I told her that he had taken a rowboat, which was the only safe way, had disguised himself as a Filipino fisherman, and had passed right by -- almost right alongside a lot of Jap warships, and destroyers, and submarines, and everything else, and they had not suspected that it was Douglas MacArthur at all. He had rowed all the way down there -- (laughter) -- right past the Japs. Perfectly simple. It was only a matter of 25 hundred miles. And I think that several people at the table believed it. (more laughter)

MR. EARLY: There's the rumor factory.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says, "There's the rumor factory." (loud laughter)

There is one thing I will tell you -- I was trying to think of something to tell you. I will have to tell you off the record. It is an awfully difficult problem, as you know, the fact that we are such a long ways off, and that we are apt to get confusing official announcements. And I don't blame -- I heard in the last couple of days two or three of the commentators on the air, and they were dead right -- absolutely dead right. They were complaining that the accounts that were given out about naval battles in Australia didn't always gibe with ours. Well, that is perfectly understandable and it will continue, because where you have joint operations you have all kinds of problems as to how to announce a thing.

Suppose a plane -- which I think is a simple example -- suppose a plane very seriously damages a -- Oh, what? -- a cruiser in an air attack at a certain point, and they see a fire -- well, I am not talking about any specific case whatsoever -- and they report that they have got the cruiser. Well, the cruiser may put the fire out in the course of the next few hours, or may run into shallow waters and get beached with a couple of feet of water under her keel, apparently still above the surface. A little while later along comes another airplane and sees the cruiser is still above water, and bombs her and sinks her.

Now it is a perfectly natural and logical thing for that -- because of the distance and everything -- to get reported as two cruisers. Actually it is only one cruiser. And so you will have -- as you had before -- you will have actual conflicts on the actual number of ships that were sunk. One pilot in a plane may report a ship was probably sunk, and another pilot seeing the same ship may report it as damaged.

Well, it is awfully hard in time of war to know just exactly what damage you have done to the other fellow, so we might as well make up our minds that these reports are as accurate as they can be made under the circumstances of reporting an action that you have been in, having seen it -- two or three different people -- from different angles. So all we can do is to ask the indulgence of you people and of the country. We are doing the best we can. I suppose that's the easiest way of putting it.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what the men -- 44 to 65 -- who register next month will be put to doing. Do you have any plans for them?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I wouldn't know enough about it to answer the question at this time. You had better go over and ask General Hershey. And I think that's the easiest way.

Q General Hershey says he doesn't know. (laughter) He referred us to the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask him to find out.

Also, I saw -- I think it was Steve (Early) said that I wasn't going to register. I am.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) I didn't say anything about it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Somebody carried it this morning. Well, I am going to register.

Q Aren't you already in, as Commander in Chief?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's all right. Take on another job. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have got plenty of time these days.

Q Mr. President, does your proclaiming the new registration day mean that you are now ready to proceed with some sort of plan for systematic allocation of labor to war industries?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q How long, sir, do you think that would be before ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got the faintest idea. You see the point of the thing is this: that at the present time, and probably until next fall, we are getting sufficient people for the jobs of many, many characters to carry on the addition to the work. I am inclined to think that by fall there will be a number of shortages.

Q At -- at that time, Mr. President, you will need then some machinery under which you can make an orderly and efficient transfer of those men to those jobs, will you not, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it depends, of course -- everybody loves new machinery. Maybe we could build up the old machinery. I don't know.

Q You mean Selective Service?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The main point is to get the men. The kind of machinery is probably the least important.

Q Mr. President, do you care to discuss the situation on Capitol Hill, with regard to legislation on the 40-hour week?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have no more ideas. I have probably far less ideas about legislation than you.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC -- Page 13 - JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #814
Executive Office of the President
March 24, 1942 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything formal today. I have just been -- there is no story in this -- looking at some of the new inventions. We are building some of our Navy patrol craft now upside down. Just a new method of shipbuilding, that's all. Starting them upside down, you weld from the outside -- weld the plates together. Then you begin to turn her over and eventually she turns up, right side up, and then is ready to go into the water. They put the deck on after she has been turned over. And apparently we are building them literally by the yard, and turning them out at the rate of one per week. Sea-going ships -- 173 feet long. This particular group I have been talking with Captain Swasey about, they are 170-footers and are being built in Bay City, Michigan. And we are trying the same construction method in several other places. Well, that is something that happened since the last war.

Q Are they able to go down the St. Lawrence?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, are they St. Lawrence size, or do they have to be cut? They don't have to be cut? Can they go through it as it is now?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, what is the advantage of building them upside down?

THE PRESIDENT: Speed -- because you work on a very -- on a surface that is very easy to work on, whereas if you build a ship from the bottom up, of course, you lie underneath the ship -- the thing is over your head.

You have to weld -- do your welding upside down, instead of being above to work. It makes for much greater speed in the same operation.

Q Are those shallow-draft vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are those shallow-draft vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are the regular draft for a 173-foot ship.

Q What tonnage would that be, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q About what tonnage would that be?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. What tonnage would you say? (turning to Captain McCrea)

CAPTAIN McCREA: I don't know, sir. I do not know.

THE PRESIDENT: I should say, off-hand, about -- what? -- 200 to about 250?

CAPTAIN McCREA: I think it's larger than that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Little larger than that. Roughly 300 tons. I don't know the actual.

Q Mr. President, is there any other classification for them other than just patrol boats?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. I don't know. They will get some mystic number painted on the bow by the Navy when they get through, but essentially they are patrol boats. We have them all sizes.

Q Mr. President, can that be extended to some other types of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Can it what?

Q Can that be extended to some other types of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we have built any bigger than that by that method yet.

Q Are any of these in service yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q They are?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, last Tuesday you came out for more parades, more bands, and the like. New York is going to have a parade -- Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and other cities ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Grand.

Q (continuing) All except Washington, D. C. I wondered if you could use your influence? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think I have got any in Washington? (more laughter) I thought one was on.

Q It was -- it was canceled. Two arguments were given against it. That -- one, the danger of concentration of crowds, troops, and spectators. The other, the difficulty of getting troops. It seems that the 3rd Cavalry has left Fort Myer.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have to bring some Marines up from Quantico.

Q That sounds like a good idea. Would you be in favor ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will talk to the Secretary of War about it tomorrow.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, Dr. --- (laughter) --- (Herbert) Evatt of Australia and Mr. (Walter) Nash of New Zealand both have emphasized the point that they don't feel that they have direct contact with the United States Government in control of the operations in the Southwest Pacific area. Mr. Nash indicated he expected something very shortly on that line. Could you throw any light on what he might be expecting?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think we have got pretty good contact at the present time. I don't think we have yet come to the point of setting up a board with a fancy name. Now if it will make anybody happy for us to set up a board with a fancy name, let's do it. Actually, there is extremely good teamwork going on now without the fancy name.

Q Is that good teamwork, sir, of recent development, or has it existed for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. That has been within the last -- since the Abda area failed to exist -- went out of business.

Q I see.

Q Are the Australians and New Zealanders then satisfied, do you think, with the present status ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I think so.

Q (continuing) --- of contact?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, did you talk with (Senator) Bennett (Champ) Clark today about the collectorship of Internal Revenue?

THE PRESIDENT: Where? In Missouri?

Q In Missouri, Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't know there was one.

Q Has your attention been called to the speech by former Assistant Secretary of Commerce (Richard) Patterson, dealing with the 6th column menace?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't read it all, but I heard about one pretty good line that he used. He was talking about the 6th column, and the 6th column consists of those people who, I think he said, wittingly or unwittingly are carrying out the work which is devised by the 5th column.

Well, that is something that the country ought to think over, because it is about as pat a statement as I know of. There are an awful lot of 6th columnists, and I might put it the other way around: that there wouldn't be any successful 5th column in this country unless they had a vehicle to distribute their poison. In other words, if the 6th column would go out of business, we needn't worry about the 5th column.

Q Mr. President, have you been asked the question -- will you tell us how you came to pronounce it "Cliveden"? (like "give") (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Pronouce what? Cliveden? I went there once.

Q (interposing) Was that report ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In fact I spent a very, very interesting week-end there with a number of members of the British cabinet of the time, in July, 1918, when the World War was on. So my authority is correct.

Q Mr. President, could you elaborate a little on this 6th column, how -- how they are carrying out the schemes of the 5th column?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so, because I would have to include quite a lot of people in the room. Now, that wouldn't be polite.

Q You mean by conversation, or by writing?

THE PRESIDENT: Both.

Q Things of that kind? False rumors?

THE PRESIDENT: The various means of communication.

Q (interposing) Carrying on false ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Newspapers, radio, conversation, cocktail parties, tea fights, etcetera.

Q Mr. President, the ex-president of Argentína, Dr. (Marcelo de) Alvear died today. Would you care to say a word about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I was very sorry to hear about it because I had the pleasure of meeting him, and I always considered him one of the -- one of the strongest forces for Democratic principles that we had anywhere in the Americas. Therefore his loss is not just an Argentine loss but common to all of us.

Q Mr. President, has anything further been done about the recommendation for the abolition of the tariff on war materials and supplies moving between Canada and the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I really honestly don't know. You had better ask -- what? -- the State Department, I guess. I haven't heard anything about it.

Q Mr. President, have you detected the presence of the 6th column at all in the present controversy regarding Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know -- I don't know enough about it. Some people say Yes, and some say No. There was one Member of the House (Rep. W.T. Schulte, Democrat, of Indiana?) in a debate -- I don't think what he said was carried in any of the papers -- who claimed that it was an -- an organized activity. He made quite a speech about it, and I don't think anybody carried it, but -- but he claimed there was. Well, I don't know. Maybe there was.

Q Mr. President, can you give your ideas on how this 6th column could be controlled, or repressed, or something done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am inclined to think that they will almost go out of business themselves, because public opinion will catch on. It has very largely already.

Q Well, if -- if, as you say, a number of news people themselves are unwittingly 6th columnists, they of course are going on about their business of printing what they think is legitimate news. Their judgment may be wrong ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- but as long as that condition exists, why they will probably perform just about as in the past.

THE PRESIDENT: Just so long as they don't fool anybody, it's all right.

Q It's a matter of judgment, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think so. And what is -- freedom of the press as a whole is a matter of judgment. I don't think the press has as much influence as it had sometime ago. Neither does anybody here.

Q I do.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you? Do you really?

Q Mr. President, do you think the people are fooled on Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you think the people have been fooled on labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, very definitely. I told you about my -- there are 5 editors now who have written to me -- editors from small-town papers, who are fine, honest people. I know them all personally. And they plead with me to let people work. The one thing in their letters: "Please let people work more than 40 hours a week in defense industries."

Q Mr. President, aside from the reference by the single Member of the House, do you have any other evidence to lead you to believe that this campaign is an organized campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Part of it is, and part of it is not.

Q Who was the Member of the House, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Who was the Member of the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q How large a part is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Percentage? Well, you can't put it on that basis. You can't say large or small.

Q Do you think, sir, it started as an organized campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, the Governor of Connecticut has sent you a protest, I believe, against the manner in which Army Air Corps commissions are being given out in his State. Has that come to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I got it, and I sent it over to (Lieutenant) General (Henry H.) Arnold to prepare a reply.

MR. EARLY: Arnold, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Arnold?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you care to say anything about your luncheon today with the Haitian President (Elie Lescot)?

THE PRESIDENT: I had an extremely interesting luncheon, in regard to the useful work that could be performed in Haiti. And that is one example of a good many other Republics around the -- let us say the Caribbean, in providing additional, very much needed foodstuffs and other things that are essential in the war. And he brought up with him his agricultural adviser, who is a Dr. (Thomas) Fennell, originally from our Department of Agriculture. And I am going to see Fennell tomorrow to talk about the planning, growing, and providing of additional things that are very much needed by all of us.

For example -- I will just use one example -- they have down there a sisal plant, from which they make hemp and ropes. Well, hemp and ropes are extremely scarce at the present time, and I am going to talk with Fennell. It is one of those more or less technical, agricultural problems to see how much more sisal we can produce in Haiti.

Q What is the name of the man you are going to talk with?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is Fennell -- F-E-N-N-E-L-L. I am going to get a story out. (to Mr. Romagna): Where is he?

MR. ROMAGNA: Shoreham Hotel, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Shoreham Hotel. Go get a story out of it.

Q Mr. President, did you talk to Colonel Olds of the Ferry Command?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. He is coming in at half-past four.

Q Can you tell us what for?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, was there any news in your meeting with Senator (R.B.) Russell (Democrat, of Georgia) and Secretary Wickard yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. We just had a general discussion about price levels, industrial and agricultural inflations of various kinds. Very satisfactory talk.

Q Mr. President, there has been talk -- there has been talk again about changes in the Cabinet, and also a change in the status of Mr. (J.G.) Winant (U.S. Ambassador to England). Do you have any comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it today in a paper. This has to be off the record. I wonder what the fellow who wrote that story -- how he feels with himself? I really wonder. I wonder what a fellow who writes a thing like that feels after he has written it, even if he wrote it in good faith? Now, of course there isn't a word of truth in it, not a word. But I wonder what his conscience is like? That -- that -- it's a question -- I don't know who wrote it -- I have forgotten -- it was in the Wall Street Journal -- I wonder what a fellow thinks of it, because even if somebody invented it and told it to him, why didn't he come and find out if there was any truth in it first? In other words, he has distributed something that isn't true.

Now, what happens? He causes trouble. Somebody sees that. They get all upset about it. It just isn't -- this is quite aside from time of war, we have had it before -- but how does he feel with himself, thinking about it inside, distributing false information to the public, even if it is to the Wall Street Journal clientele? I am one of their readers too. (laughter) But it raises a very nice question -- deliberate statements there which are completely untrue. Now how does -- how does he feel when he goes to bed at night?

Q Mr. President, I don't know anything about this story or the one you are talking about, but I would like ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Didn't you read it?

Q No, I didn't read it.

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to read the Wall Street Journal.

Q I know it. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, you will learn a lot.

Q But I would like to talk to you a minute about the problems that we are up against.

THE PRESIDENT: I know. I know.

Q Last week we heard that a ship was sunk off Morehead City, North Carolina, that the men had been washed ashore and they were without care, lying on tables and floors, because there was a disagreement on the part of the Government agencies as to which should handle it. Now, we investigated that story. We got hold of some intelligent newspapermen in Wilmington, (N.C.), who said that they had looked that story up, and they had been getting the report from all over the United States, so much so that the wires had been tied up for hours getting it in. Does that look like what you call the 6th column activity?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so.

Q (interposing) Well, anyway ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I wouldn't classify that as anything but an honest effort to get certain information.

Q But how does it spring up all over the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: In the process of getting a thing like that, I don't think, frankly, that the official censor crowd have shaken down into a reasonable and proper method of handling the many cases. Now when a thing like that comes around I can't see any particular reason for withholding that news from the papers.

Q Neither can I. Yet later in comes the story that these men have landed in a little town called Southport.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is stupid on the part of the press censor and Navy Department or the Army to do a thing like that.

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Mr. President, that's not censorship, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not? What is it?

MR. EARLY: That news is in the department to which -- if it were a Navy ship it would be Navy Department, and if it was Army it would be Army.

THE PRESIDENT: What is it then?

MR. EARLY: The censor has nothing to do with it. The war censorship regulations provide, Mr. President, I believe, when it is announced by any competent authority, it is news. It doesn't go through the censor, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Then who handled this one?

MR. EARLY: I never heard of it before.

Q I don't know who handled it because we got denials of it all the time.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think a thing like that ought to be withheld.

Q I am not trying to point my finger at a single soul, but I am just trying -- trying to find out when we are saying the truth -- telling the truth.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are dead right, that the press has behaved absolutely magnificent. Now there are various things -- for instance, the question of airplane accidents in this country. This is all off the record -- I am just talking to you amongst ourselves -- there are a lot of people who have two opinions. We have -- I don't know -- I don't know how many -- you probably know far better than I do -- young pilots in training all over the country in training camps. They are in the last stages -- they are ready to go into the combat service. And almost every paper we pick up, morning or afternoon, there is this: "Two planes collide in the air. Everybody killed." Or there is a plane that hasn't been heard of, and fell into some place in the Rocky Mountains.

Well, there are a lot of people who feel that -- that has been cut out in England, where they are training a lot of pilots, and they don't give out training accidents -- and people here, they see, are getting awful jittery over the number of people that are killed in training for flying.

Now there is the other school of thought that says people will get accustomed to it. They have got to realize that in training pilots that there will be a certain percentage of fatalities anyway, and that the percentage of fatalities is about the same now as it was a year ago, or two years ago, and therefore doesn't do any harm to give out these things.

Now there is -- there is a nice question: Is it the best thing to do, not to print the stories of accidents in training, or should they all come out?

Now, frankly, I don't know. I haven't made up my mind. I would like to know what you people think. You are very apt, of course, to get from the small town that the plane fell into -- you are very apt to get a wire story out of there -- very natural. Probably would be one of the Press Association people who wired it out, or the local paper. And it would be carried on the front page -- second page -- of practically all the papers. It would be a hard thing to cut it out, except by voluntary agreement on the part of the editors of the papers. Well, I don't know whether we should ask them to do so or not.

Q If you are going to cut out the loss of a few men ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- why wouldn't you cut out the losses of ships with several hundred sunk at a time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, couldn't you get an index to that from the reception that was given the loss of that submarine off the Panama Canal? That was -- it was taken simply as a casualty of war. Although it was an accident, no attention was paid to it comparable to what would have been paid to it in peacetime.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) It seems to me you would get the same ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The same reaction.

Q (continuing) --- reaction.

THE PRESIDENT: Personally, I think the average person in this country -- I am inclined to think that they are not accustomed to it. They are sorry about it, etcetera, but they regard it as one of the risks of war. That would be my first slant. But, on the other hand, there is a very large part of public opinion which says, "For God's Sake don't print all this stuff."

Q Mr. President, if it weren't printed, people because they -- they weren't printed, wouldn't that create a much more fertile field for rumors?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly possible.

As I say, in England they cut it out entirely, but it's on smaller planes.

Q It has been suggested that instead of building dormitories on the Mall you could use the barracks that have been vacated at the Arlington Experimental Farm. Have you given it any thought?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it in the paper. My only problem is the question: what people do they hold?

Q Takes the 12th Infantry.

THE PRESIDENT: I think about a thousand places.

Q Easily, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the number given. I think it is well worth considering.

Q Mr. President, is Lord Beaverbrook in the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I read ---

Q (interposing) The intimation out of London indicated he was?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word. Not a peep -- really and truly.

Q Mr. President, anything about your conference with General (Wladislaw) Sikorski?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about the major strategy of the world.

Q Mr. President, one more Labor question. There has been a development on the Hill in favor of the 48-hour week, starting time-and-a-half after the 48th hour. Could you express an opinion on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I told you all about that once or twice before. I don't think we want to reduce the pay envelope of the average person employed in this country at this time. I don't think we should increase it in a great many of the higher brackets.

Q Mr. President, there has been a suggestion also for overtime pay, there being substituted "incentive pay," that is that money be paid on a basis of the amount they produce, as a man who produces more than ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The old piece-work basis.

Q Very much.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes.

Q That idea -- Mr. (Donald) Nelson suggested that the other day ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I don't know.

Q (continuing) --- calling it "incentive pay."

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know about it at all.

Q Mr. President, have you any plans for taking a "February" vacation? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope -- I hope not to work on Easter Day.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC, Page 25 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #815
Executive Office of the President
March 31, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M.,E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Come in Pa. I am going to talk about you. What do you want to say?

GENERAL WATSON: I haven't been to one for such a long time, I thought I would come in.

THE PRESIDENT: It's your turn to get talked about.

GENERAL WATSON: I don't know anything good that you can say about me.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the trouble. (laughter)

GENERAL WATSON: I am going to the concert tonight. (Russian War Relief Benefit)

Q How are you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Where is John Henry?

Q John is around. He started out ---

Q (interposing) He is bringing up the rear.

THE PRESIDENT: Bringing up the rear? Tell him I want to see him.

Q Got the gavel for him?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got the gavel for him. (holding it up) A very nice one.

Q We have the culprit, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We have the culprit.

Q John's here.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is he? (holding up the gavel) I am going to have it inscribed. It came out of George Washington's cherry tree. (laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: It's a bigger tree than we thought.

Q Not out of the Mayflower, Mr. President? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Stay afterwards, John. We will decide on the inscription, whether it is to be ribald or not. (more laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: In keeping with our dignity.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

I don't know why anybody is coming in today. I am too sleepy to talk.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got a very nice letter from Norman Davis today. He says, "On December 12 you issued a Proclamation asking the American people to subscribe to a Red Cross War Fund a minimum of 50 million dollars. The first appeal for the War Fund came just before the holiday season, so most of the committees started their organized work about the first week in January. By the 7th of February the 50 million dollars was in hand, but to keep pace with the growing war need, the Red Cross asked for an over-subscription, which would bring the total to 65 million dollars. That total has been exceeded today, and still more will come in. The total result seems to us magnificent proof not only of the vitality of the Red Cross but of the determination of the people to make whatever sacrifices are called for to win the war."

Now that is a very satisfactory answer to the appeal.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, I understand that the District has not met its quota. The only large city in the country, I believe. And they said that -- the local Red Cross people said the donations had run somewhat short in the Government. I don't know ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think the more attention that is called to that the better. In other words, Washington papers please copy.

Q I had that in mind. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And this being Holy Week, I wanted just to read from a sentence from a letter that I got, which I think is worth quoting: "No matter what may be the religious faith of individuals, most Americans see in Calvary's Cross the eternal symbol that light will conquer darkness, truth proves stronger than error, and life greater than death. It is the only sign by which we can conquer the powers of black paganism that now threaten everything which we hold dear."

I don't think I have got another thing.

Q Is that an excerpt, sir from a personal letter?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Yes.

Q Is that an excerpt?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is it possible to say from whom it is?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's not the news part of it. The news is what was said.

Q May we have that excerpt, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. ROMAGNA: Later? Or now?

THE PRESIDENT: You read it, and I'll check you.

(the foregoing quotation was read back to the newspapermen)

Q Mr. President, this Pacific Council that meets tomorrow -- there have been stories that London would decide policy and this Council strategy. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q A similar Council in London?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. They are consultive, both.

Q Both of them consultive?

THE PRESIDENT: Consultive in each place, and consultive with each other.

Q Will all the powers represented upon the Council, Mr. President, have equal representation and equal powers in respect to their voice on that Council?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't a question of equal powers. They are consultive.

Q Mr. President, is there some means provided by which the liaison may be maintained between that Council and the Joint Staff Board here?

THE PRESIDENT: That the what may be?

Q How will this Council cooperate, if it will, with the Joint Staff Board here in Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the trouble is that you always try to be -- everybody tries to be didactic, and this is one thing that you can't be didactic on. It's a consultive body. That's all it is. It doesn't go out and fight. It consults here in Washington. There are mostly laymen on it.

Q What do they consult about -- supplies?

THE PRESIDENT: No. About the -- what time the moon is going to rise tomorrow night. They are going to consult on the general progress of defending ourselves against the powers of darkness, according to that letter that I read. You see, Pete, you can't, as I say, you can't be didactic. It is a get-together meeting, to see what we are doing, and consult among ourselves. That's all it is. It is not supply, and it is not fighting a naval action, and it is not sending airplanes at a given time tomorrow night.

Q That's what I wanted to get.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, (Dr. Herbert V.) Evatt and Mr. (Walter) Nash, the Australian and New Zealander, on several occasions have referred to a wish that the Anzacs would be represented on the Munitions Assignments Board. Is there such a step in prospect?

THE PRESIDENT: No. For the very good -- for the very good reason that all these consultations end up, as they have in the past, in an agreement -- a general agreement. And when you come to carry out some of the details of that, it's the people who make the munitions that actually carry it out. It will be carried out in good faith for all nations, in accordance with general policies arrived at, either by -- Oh, what? -- combined staffs, or a Pacific Council here and in London.

And I am afraid -- I am afraid that we cannot -- it would not be right to assume that there is going to be a row, in view of the fact that there is in all probability going to be unanimity. I am afraid there is not going to be any real story about rows. It spoils your stories, of course, but there we are.

Q Mr. President, the United Press carries a dispatch today from General (Douglas) MacArthur's headquarters, indicating that the General still -- there is still a question as to whether he has command of the naval forces. Would you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't. I haven't heard anything since I got back. I would have to check up. I think within his particular area that he is the Supreme Commander. Is that right John? (McCrea)

CAPTAIN McCREA: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Within the Southwest area he is the Southwest Commander, and that means air and land and -- and Navy.

Q Mr. President, India was omitted from the Pacific Council. Is there any chance of that being corrected?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that the Pacific laps the shores of India, as I remember it.

Q But Pacific operations do.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Pacific operations do.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they? Where?

Q In Burma.

THE PRESIDENT: But that is not in the Pacific either.

Now, as a matter of fact, of course, you will realize that on this general geographical question the Pacific Ocean is generally -- and what might be called in lay terms -- considered to stop at Singapore, and that on the west side of Australia you begin to get into the Pacific Ocean -- I mean into the Indian Ocean. On the east side you are in the -- in the Pacific Ocean. And, proceeding according to what might be called a layman's explanation, everything west of Australia would be in the Indian Ocean area, and not the Pacific Ocean area.

In fact "area" is probably not a good term. We are adopting a new term, called "theater." The Pacific "theater," and the Indian "theater," which is a simpler word. You don't get confused with subareas like the Southwest area in the Pacific theater.

Q Well, General MacArthur's control would have to extend, to some extent, into the Indian Ocean then, would it not, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Where?

Q On the west side of Australia?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- that -- No, no -- I say things west of Australia are in the Indian Ocean area except for what might be called a reasonable distance out, where you are bound to have a certain amount of overlapping in any theater. You don't have a brick wall. Planes might very easily fly from the Indian area into the -- close to the edge of Australia, and vice versa.

Q Mr. President, does that lead to the assumption that there will be a Near Eastern--Indian Ocean Council, in addition to the Southwest Pacific Council?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know, what kind of a separate command there would be in there, but certainly it is not -- it is not under -- under the Americans.

Q Well, you really have (Lieutenant) General (Joseph W.) Stilwell in part of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I was going to say -- you can't -- you can't put up a brick wall. Of course, China itself is naturally considered as being in the -- in the Pacific theater, and there is always an exception to the rule. A little southern corner of China does lap over into the Indian theater, and that is where Chinese troops under General Stilwell are now fighting. And of course relatively it is a very small portion of the Republic of China. Nearly all of it is in the Pacific area -- theater.

Q Mr. President, have you anything to say on the international cartels that have been discussed on the Hill -- the Standard Oil agreements, and the others?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Don't think -- don't know what it was.

Q I mean the charge has been made, and later denied, that the United States has been deprived of certain products, such as buna rubber and others, through the Standard Oil of New Jersey.

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the truth, I haven't looked into that. I thought you were going to talk about the nudist problem? (laughter)

Q Let's discuss that too.

Q Have you anything to say on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. All I can say about that nudist problem is that -- of course this has got to be off the record, so stop writing -- (cries of "Oh," and laughter) -- I would have to be too careful if it was on the record. (more laughter)

This is off the record. Of course, it is a very serious thing, these charges about the old gentleman (Maurice Parmelee, Board of Economic Welfare economist) having written a book on nudism eleven or twelve years ago, because of its -- it has entirely disrupted production in this country. It has slowed us down terribly -- everybody. You know, the circulation of the newspapers has almost doubled in the last forty-eight hours. But of course the worst is yet to come -- this is off the record -- you are soon going to find out -- in fact some of you here never thought of it -- that there is a much more serious thing, which is almost going to stop the production of airplanes, and tanks, and ships, and things like that.

We have discovered that in the House of Representatives itself, we have got something far worse than a nudist -- we have got an exhibitionist! (loud laughter)

Q Is there just one, Mr. President? (more loud laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(continued laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #816
Executive Office of the President
April 3, 1942 -- 11.00 A.M., E.W.T.

VOICES: (to Earl Godwin, hobbling to his chair, using a cane to support a bandaged foot) Welcome home!

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look at the old boy! How are you?

MR. GODWIN: Well, I am getting ready to escape the draft! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that will help you, because they will put you in an armchair, like a lot of other people. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You look awfully well.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You have put on a lot more weight -- bad business.

MR. GODWIN: If I could keep away from these cocktail parties, it would be all right.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It must be Hell. Nobody ever gives me one. (laughter)

Q We can whip one up in a hurry for you, Mr. President.

Q Tom (Reynolds) is going off the wagon tomorrow, we can fix it up.

MR. GODWIN: Russ Young celebrated his 60th birthday ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Who?

MR. GODWIN: Russ Young.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes, yes. Which was yesterday, wasn't it?

MR. GODWIN: Yesterday. He looks better than he ever did.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. He is doing a grand job, too.

MR. GODWIN: Swell.

Q (to Mr. Early) Feeling better, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

Q How did you do? (at Bowie) Did your fever get better about Noon?

MR. EARLY: No. Nothing got better.

THE PRESIDENT: Aren't they all coming in?

MR. EARLY: (to the President) The Secret Service put in a new check-off system. They call them name by name out there.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. Comparing fingerprints? (laughter)

Q That's for next week. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got -- as far as news goes -- anything at all this morning. I want -- I want a little help. It's a question of official correspondence. There are several agencies of the Government that want a term to designate the present war. And I don't want to invent a term myself. I would rather it came from the -- down below, instead of up on top. And I would like to have some advice as to what term we should use. So far we have gone along with calling it the Second World War, as distinguished from the First World War. But I wish we could get a very short name that would have some connotation of the fact that this is a -- a war for the preservation of smaller peoples and the Democracies of the world. How you can put that into one adjective, I don't know. It would be much better to put it into one adjective. So if you people could be thinking it over -- you can write a story about the fact that a name is needed. I don't think Second World War is particularly effective.

Q Are wars ever named while they are in progress?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that may be true.

Q There was the Hundred Years War, and the Thirty Years War, and the Seven Years war.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) What was the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You are a cheerful fellow this morning. (laughter)

Q You notice I kept shortening it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Did the Civil War have a name when it was going on, do you happen to know?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, unfortunately, during the -- I think during the course of the Civil War in the North it was called by a term which was discarded fairly shortly afterwards. It was called the War of the Rebellion, because a lot of the war records that were published after the war were labeled by that -- that term.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But it didn't set very well, and was abandoned very soon.

Q Mr. President, during the War of the American Revolution, any reference to The Revolution during that war meant the Revolution of 1688.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is perfectly true. Well, we will try to find something. Somebody suggested "The War with the Axis Powers." Well, that takes too much paper and ink.

Q Mr. President, would you mind calling it, so far as the enemy is concerned, the "GIP" War -- for German -- Italian -- Japanese ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's right.

Q (continuing) --- the "GIP" War? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got anything else at all, except that this is all part -- I might say one other thing that went out yesterday from the Budget Director and myself, and that was a checkup by the different departments in an effort to save paper. You will all be pleased to hear that. The less paper we use the more paper there will be for the newspapers.

Q Are you in favor of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sure. (laughter)

They have had to come -- for instance, in England nearly all of their official stuff is written on both sides of the page. You have seen that. Quite a lot of the stuff I get from England is written on both sides of the page. Of course we never do that on a typewriter.

MR. GODWIN: We get it from the War Department -- mimeographed on both sides of the page ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Do you?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- on stuff that ---

Q (interposing) A lot of it.

Q A great deal of it.

THE PRESIDENT: We ought to do more of it.

Q It means you have to have two people to paste them up. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Mathematically correct.

Q Practically correct. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything, sir, about your discussions with the Pacific War Council?

THE PRESIDENT: It was a very successful meeting. I think we meet again on Wednesday next, is that right?

CAPTAIN McCREA: Tuesday, wasn't it?

Q They said yesterday, Tuesday.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute -- hold on.

CAPTAIN McCREA: You said that we would meet on the 8th, a week from that Wednesday, which was the 1st.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Wednesday.

CAPTAIN McCREA: The 8th, at 11.30.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to participate in any way in the observance of Pan American Day on April 14th?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q In what respect?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are all coming over here instead of my going over there this year. They are all coming over here.

Q Do you speak?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, are you seeing the Labor group today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are coming in at twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: When?

THE PRESIDENT: Twelve.

Q Do you expect, sir, to discuss questions of personnel for war industries with this group, or is some other specific problem coming up?

THE PRESIDENT: No specific problem. Probably touch on them all.

MR. GODWIN: Do you expect to have -- can we expect a sharp story out of this Labor group ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- an important announcement, or anything of that sort?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, there has been considerable discussion lately -- you might say a lot of smoke more than fire -- about consolidating information agencies in the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We are all working on it, and it is an awfully difficult technical problem, as you can well imagine.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I have been doing a lot of studying on it. And I haven't -- I haven't got anything yet that is satisfying.

Q Is there any truth to the report that Casey Jones (managing editor of the Washington Post) might head it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Neither Casey nor Jesse. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that one man would -- would head ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Pete, there is no use in my talking about it. Of course, as I say, -- what? -- there are half a dozen different ways of doing it, and I haven't got anything yet.

Q You haven't got to that stage yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on Martin Dies' solution for the -- the solution that everybody he names be fired?

THE PRESIDENT: I think what I said the other day covers a multitude of sins. (laughter)

Q Is that still off the record, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is a perfectly normal remark. That is all right to print that -- a multitude of sins.

Q I mean the original remark?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess so. It's pretty well around town. (laughter)

Q You mean it has done its work?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You mean it has done its work?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it has done its work.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

Q Mr. President, have you received any report from your representative in the Vatican, on the report that the Vatican and Tokyo are about to exchange representatives?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this is only from recollection. I would like to -- you had better check on it -- as I understand it, the Vatican is exchanging representatives with Tokyo, and Chungking.

Q And Chungking too?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, may we expect soon ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think you had better qualify that, and say that they are discussing exchanging representatives, because I think that is safer.

Q Sir, may we expect soon the naming of a new Ambassador to Spain to succeed Mr. (Alexander W.) Weddell?

THE PRESIDENT: Very soon. I am just waiting for the Senate to meet.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to have a permanent representative at the Holy See too?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can't tell. I can't tell.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, the official ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is a question of transportation.

Q The official British wireless -- the official British wireless, the day before yesterday, announced that Britain had called to the attention of the Vatican the anxiety with which it would view the exchange of diplomatic representatives between the Vatican and Tokyo. Did we make some such similar representation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, no, no. I didn't even know that.

Q Mr. President, is Chile classed with the Argentine in regard to defense materials?

THE PRESIDENT: How do you mean?

Q Well, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They are both getting them, I think.

Q Are they both getting them?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, a very serious question was raised this morning -- a report that the War Production Board is banning the use of tin plate for beer caps.

THE PRESIDENT: That is serious.

Q Have the brain-powers of the Government been saddled with the problem of finding a substitute for that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. But I guess we could work out something, of course, and get one which is a little easier, and cheaper, and quicker all right. (laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC, Page 57 --JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #817
Executive Office of the President
April 7, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M.,E.W.T.

MR. GODWIN: How do you do, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: How are you coming along? All right?

MR. GODWIN: Can't dance very well. Steve says I am back to normal. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to have a talk with "Pa" (Watson). He has taken off 11 pounds.

MR. GODWIN: How do you do it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: I haven't eaten anything since lunch. (laughter)

Q Carrying that Phi Beta Kappa key.

THE PRESIDENT: Where does he wear it? Where does he wear it?

Q I think on his pencil chain, or something.

MR. GODWIN: I think I will have a talk with him.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

What's that, your draft notice? (laughter) (Earl Godwin's papers spread out on the desk)

MR. GODWIN: That comes off pretty quick, doesn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I had a nice story for you, and Steve (Early) told me I can't use it until Friday, ---

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Oh, nuts.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- so I am stuck. I have nothing.

MR. GODWIN: I notice, sir -- was that the end of your statement? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: I notice -- I notice in connection with Army Day your use of the term "total war." Is that the term that you have decided to use for this war, instead of ---

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. There is nothing original about that, anyway.

Q Have there been any good suggestions on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not very good yet.

Q What do you think of this one: "The Peoples' War"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- might have to characterize the "peoples."

Q Do you have any comment on that Anthracite Commission report?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except I think -- I think I can say this, that it is -- as a -- as a temporary thing it is a definite contribution. In other words, it advocates the putting in of industries in a section of the country where there is a large population with -- without enough work mining coal, which could very usefully in wartime turn its attention to certain industries. It isn't of course the final solution of the problem, but it calls for further studies on that, and it is a thing that at the end of the war we will have to take up as one of the important -- might call it the "area" problem.

Q Mr. President, it was reported from India last week that you might mediate the differences between the Indian leaders and the British government. Have you any ideas either on that or any other phases of the Indian question?

THE PRESIDENT: No. None at all.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything of your conference with the Attorney General (Francis Biddle) and Mr. (J. Edgar) Hoover?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we were talking about intelligence -- of course, with that group there that is an obvious thing -- (laughter) -- and information, and propaganda, and anti-propaganda. I don't think you can get a story out of it because most of it was highly confidential.

Q Mr. President, there is a story this morning to the effect that plans for the Navy to operate the Merchant Marine had been brought in?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They have not.

Q They have not?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Mr. President, the crowd in the House that is trying to resolve this difficulty about State taxes on defense contracts seems to have run into quite a lot of difficulty.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I did too.

Q (continuing) Have you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) A long time ago.

Q (continuing) --- seen any formula? Have you discussed with them ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I didn't know they had taken it up.

Q It's the fight about income taxes, gasoline taxes ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and all that stuff.

THE PRESIDENT: By the Ways and Means Committee?

Q Yes. The Ways and Means Committee did report on a bill. Then they ran into great difficulties to amend it. Now they have got three or four amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it at all, about what they have done, but as you know, we took it up about eight or ten months ago ---

Q (interjecting) A year ago.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and it has never yet been solved.

Q Mr. President, what are your ideas on the principle of any of the States taxing defense, disregarding the details of how it can be worked out? Do you favor changing the State Taxes -- the cost plus ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know, Pete, what I favor.

Q What?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what I favor. Of course, the problem is really -- is really this: that should the -- should the Federal Government stand the cost of certain State taxes on the creation of Federal activities and Federal public works? Under the present system the States taxing Federal contractors and their machinery, and so forth and so on, doing work for the Federal Government, it helps the State financially and it hurts the Federal Government financially.

Q One of the arguments that this -- Federal expenditures in the State does increase the State's taxes, because the State taxes the retail purchases of the workers, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q (continuing) --- and that the point was that if you don't change the law it will cost about a billion dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There you are.

Q The question is whether to subsidize the States?

THE PRESIDENT: It is perfectly true. You have stated it very fairly and clearly. (laughter) I don't know the answer.

Q Mr. President, as a corollary, it has been reported that you are giving some study, or have studied the matter, whether we should suspend some of the State laws which set up varying restrictions on Interstate Commerce on the tonnage of trucks, and that sort of thing, for the duration of the war, in order to simplify and broaden the action?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there were some States -- I think Kentucky, wasn't it

Mac (Marvin H. McIntyre), that had very, very drastic restrictions on size?

Q There is quite a diversity of State laws.

THE PRESIDENT: There is quite a diversity, and it ought to be made -- as an emergency measure only -- more possible for a truck that is engaged in defense work to go from one portion of the country to another portion of the country without running foul of State law.

Q Well, isn't -- is it possible that you will -- you will take up that problem with the Governors before long?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it has been taken up, in some cases, but I am not dead sure. You had better check on it.

Q Mr. President, the Morgenthau tax plan would double the income taxes of Members of Congress, raising it from 1 thousand to 2 thousand dollars or a little over. Have you figured up what it would cost you?

THE PRESIDENT: Not for next year. It's bad enough now. (laughter)

Q Well, that does not incline you toward a general sales tax, does it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you had ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- in spite of great personal hardship. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you had any late reports on plans for further increased use of the inland waterways along the Atlantic coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have been discussing the matter with Judge (Joseph J.) Mansfield, and quite a number of other people -- Joe Eastman, etcetera. And we are increasing the use of the inland waterways from -- you had better check on this -- I think it is from Jacksonville north we can get an eleven-foot channel -- I think I am right. But from Jacksonville south it is only about a six-foot channel. And, of course, there is no way of getting across Florida. You would have to go -- either way -- around Key West. But don't start a controversy about the Florida Canal -- Ship Canal this time. (laughter) And once you get around to Georgia you do have a pretty good channel along the Gulf coast. But that gap from Jacksonville round to Georgia or Alabama is only six feet. Of course that almost precludes the use of those canals. You have to have a transfer of cargo. And I think it would take probably too long to deepen out those channels, or build as we call it a dike -- a creek -- that is a polite word -- across Florida. Probably take too long to do it now. To start it now it would use up an awful lot of valuable manpower and machinery. We will have to do the best we can with what we have got at the present time. But it is -- we -- we -- we are laying plans for the greater use of it.

One of the studies that I got under way at the present time -- Maine papers please copy -- where is (May Craig) -- she isn't here today? --- (laughter) --- is the building of wooden barges in those old yards up in the State of Maine, and New Hampshire, and certain portions of Massachusetts and Connecticut, where they used to build the old wooden schooners -- and there are still a lot of old people that are awfully good shipwrights -- and build wooden barges primarily for use on the -- on these canals, where they can be used with a maximum draft of less than eleven feet. That is a perfectly possible thing to do, without interfering with steel shipping.

Q Do the "Sea Otters" figure into this consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q They don't?

Q Mr. President, has any thought been given to a pipeline across the neck of Florida, from tanker to tanker?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you inquired into the feasibility of concrete self-propelled barges? There has been some talk about that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but when you come down to concrete self-propelled barges it is a whole lot cheaper, and easier to launch, and use material that is more available, to build them out of wood.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conversation with the Pacific War Council today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose -- I suppose the only thing that I can say is that we discussed a great many of the things that we talked about before, and a great many new matters which would come up in the Pacific every single week that goes by. There will be a lot of new problems come up, because the whole problem of the war in the Pacific region, and the connection of that region with other regions, they vary from week to week. As one of the members said to me, "You know, it is a pretty good record here. We have had two meetings, and there isn't a headline of dissension in either meeting."

Q Lord Halifax told us, sir, that you had given the Council a review of the American reinforcements, both in terms of men ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and materiel ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's right.

Q (continuing) --- in the Pacific, and that he was very encouraged.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is there anything you could say beyond that, within the limits of military information?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can.

Q Mr. President, in your talk with the Attorney General this afternoon, did you discuss the Sedition Laws, and how that policy could be stiffened?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except in one particular. It doesn't relate to Americans in this country, or to this country. And I can't tell you the details of that, because they might skip out.

Q Americans in this -- I didn't get that. Americans in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: It did not relate to Americans in this country.

Q Mr. President, there are stories from New Delhi this afternoon that Pandit (Jawaharlal) Nehru has sent a message to you. Have you received ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. I haven't received any message.

Q Can you report any progress on your Information revision program on consolidating ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, except we are working on it very hard. That is one of the things I talked to the Attorney General on -- this group that was in.

Q Several weeks ago, sir, you told us that you were then considering, among other things, a plan for controling wages as well as prices. Are those studies developed any further? Is there anything you could tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think they are coming along.

Q (interposing) Can you give us any clue ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I wouldn't give you any date, because from past experience, when I say a date in my own mind, it takes twice as long.

Q (interposing) Can you give us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But we are coming along.

Q Can you give us a clue or direction toward which they are going?

THE PRESIDENT: I can give you a clue, if you won't -- well, I hope your guess will be good. That's all I can say. I hope your interpretation of my few choice words will be -- will be fairly good.

I have been thinking -- trying to think in terms of the average man, woman and child in this country. And there are two salient factors. The first is: a fellow, even in time of war, thinks a great deal, and very, very rightly, as to what it costs him and his family to live. And the second is that the average man, woman and child -- not even average, but the overwhelming majority in both cases -- are patriotic and want to do all they can to turn out things that are needed in the war.

And then the -- then there is one other thing, which is a sort of a corollary to it. I have been giving a good deal of study to certain other studies that have been made, in regard to the output of the human being. And I have never seen that stressed. During the World War and after it -- Oh, for ten years -- a great many studies have been made in -- here, and in Great Britain, and on the Continent of Europe, as to the most -- the number of hours per week which, week in and week out, will turn out the most goods.

And that is something that you can all follow up. I will give you a lead. It was found definitely, for example, that everybody is agreed that the average human being in industry turns out more goods, week in and week out, when they work 48 hours a week than when they work 60 hours a week. That is something that the people of this country ought to examine and get into their heads.

I think it was Mr. (Henry) Ford, a great many years ago, who said that over 48 hours -- or it may have been over 44 hours, I don't know which -- anyway, it was a reasonably small number of hours -- anything over that doesn't count for an addition to production -- does not increase the total stuff that he turns out with his hands.

Saying which, write your stories.

Q Mr. President, in your letter to the United Auto Workers, you said that no employer or group of employees should profit from the relinquishment of double pay.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Have you any method of implementing that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't thought out any specific method yet. I think it can be done by discouragement of double pay. But a practical way of doing it is not -- have none.

Q Mr. President, you referred to the human output per person, and increasing the output of each man working in the plant. Would you consider the proposal which was made sometime ago for bonuses to -- cash bonuses to workers who -- who turn out a greater number of pieces, as ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am utterly opposed, first, to the piecework system in peacetime, and to its extension, especially in time of war, because I think most people in time of war are going to turn out all they can without bonuses. I don't like the bonus method.

Q Mr. President, regarding that Anthracite report again, can you say what the prospects are for following out its emergency recommendations of putting in war plants ---

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THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I sent it over to the Army and Navy, and the -- what's the name of the board ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Nelson.

[War Production Board ?]

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the Allocations Board ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Nelson.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the plant Board, and also to W.P.B. (War Production Board), to try to locate some industries in that region.

Q Mr. President, we are having a little war of our own in Pennsylvania. The Democratic State Chairman up there gave an interview to the press two or three days ago, saying he could say without fear of contradiction that you favor the nomination of Dr. (Luther) Harr for governor. I would like to have your comment.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't favored the nomination of anyone for governor. In fact, I got to the point -- this is off the record, it will have to be -- about two months ago, and I decided not to read any Philadelphia papers -- (laughter) -- so I wouldn't know anything about Pennsylvania State politics. (more laughter)

Q That still goes?

THE PRESIDENT: And I stuck to it.

Q Is the first sentence on the record, Mr. President? I am in favor -- before you said it was off the record, you made the remark that you have not favored nomination of anyone for governor?

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) That's on.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You can use that.

MR. EARLY: That's on.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #818
Executive Office of the President
April 10, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M.,E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Where's the hammer? Where's the hammer? (gavel)

MR. EARLY: Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, here it is. (laughter)

Q Might keep us in order?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Might keep us in order?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(to John Henry): All ready to make your speech?

MR. JOHN HENRY: Well, not a very good one, Mr. President.

Q We'll cheer anyway, John.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We'll cheer anyway.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a little -- carrying out a promise -- a little present to give to the president of The White House Correspondents' Association. I found it at Hyde Park. It is one of the gavels that was used in the 1936 Democratic National Convention. And it is very simple. It is just plain wording. It says, "White House Correspondents' Association, from F.D.R., 1942."

And you will notice that I am handing it handle first to John Henry. (laughter)

MR. JOHN HENRY: Thank you, sir. I hope we will be able to preserve the old order and not the new order. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything today.

Of course we all feel badly about Bataan. There isn't any further news, except a very grand message from General (Jonathan M.) Wainwright, which I -- to thank me for what I had sent him. Just one part of that message that I think that you can use -- just a few words: "Our flag on this beleaguered island fortress still flies."

Q Did that come in this morning, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did that come in this morning, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q That is from Corregidor, is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, did you have a conference this morning with Mr. Eccles, Mr. Morgenthau and the Vice President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Haven't seen anybody this morning.

Q Mr. President, is the Administration contemplating some anti-inflation drive?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is there some general plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's coming to a head.

Q Could you tell us anything further?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Could you say whether an increase in the tax bill is part of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you anything about it, because it hasn't jelled.

Q Mr. President, what has become of the 2 billion -- the proposed 2 billion increase in Social Security taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is part of the tax thing -- and I said I couldn't say anything about it.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about the reports you are getting from Louis Johnson in India?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had anything for -- Oh, I don't know, what? -- yesterday morning early, and just the same -- the same stuff that you have had that has been published. Nothing different in it.

Q Anything new on the war information setup, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q On this war information setup?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

Q Mr. President, has any plan reached you yet for bringing the Merchant Marine into the Navy? Secretary Knox indicated that you were considering it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it. Literally not a word.

Q Mr. President, can you tell what the present status is of the -- of the bill for the care of soldiers' dependents? I understood the Bureau of the Budget had sent it over to the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got it yet. I don't know.

Q Would you care to say anything about the general subject?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I haven't -- I haven't even studied it. It is supposed to be coming to me.

Q Mr. President, any plans being made for the -- us older people to register on April 26 or 27?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I am having a party.

Q You are having a party?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We are all having a party.

Q Everybody at that age?

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody over 45.

Q Easter eggs?

THE PRESIDENT: Most -- a lot of the people in this room are all having a party.

Q Mr. President, can you comment at this time on the situation in India?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. As I say, I haven't heard anything since yesterday morning early.

On that registration, Pete, I think that you could say something like this -- all of you -- and that is the whole thing relates more or less to manpower -- and manpower includes womanpower too -- and we are seriously considering voluntary registration for all women from 18 to 65. One trouble -- one difficulty of this is the number of people who would come forward and enroll -- the mechanical difficulties of getting the machinery going, that is why. We did talk about having something like that -- voluntary registration for women on the same date, April 27, but the mechanics were too difficult because we would have had so many women. They haven't worked out the questions and printed the cards, so probably if the thing -- I say very definitely, if anything like that goes through there would be a voluntary registration date set for a later time.

Q Could the mechanics of it be assigned to the women?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could the mechanics of it be assigned to the women?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is one of the things they are talking about too.

Q What would be done with these women, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Find out! (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything you could say yet about the Government's plans for the overall handling of the entire manpower problem, the channeling of these people into the proper war industries and the whole -- the whole subject that you have been working on for several weeks?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except this: that one of the real problems in setting up machinery on the -- on handling the manpower and womanpower effort, we know what they can do and where they are, and so forth and so on -- training. In my mind it is a question really of whether we want to set up a completely new organization on that, or whether we want to set up a mere supervision -- central supervision over a great many agencies of the Government that are now actively and actually engaged in the use and allocation of manpower and womanpower. We have, of course, a good many organizations which are carrying on the functions at the present time. Well, I can't think of all of the organizations. I suppose the Employment Service is the -- is the largest in point of numbers, although it may be exceeded -- I don't know -- by the -- the individual plants who are running their own service, taking people -- taking people in and training them. There is vocational education -- there is N.Y.A. -- general supervision by the Labor Division of W.P.B. (War Production Board) I may have left some important ones out, but that is the general idea. In other words, we have the machinery, and do we want to set up another complete agency of Government to take over all of that machinery? It may be possible to arrive at the same thing through a rather small -- Oh, I hate the word, but have to use it: coordinating committee, to see that they all tie in together. That hasn't been set.

Q Has your Cabinet committee, which has been studying this problem for you, reported as yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Only verbally.

Q Only verbally?

THE PRESIDENT: We have talked about it at almost every meeting.

Q The Labor group have made recommendations, have they not, to go into the Department of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, are there any plans for a super-labor body of any kind?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q When do you think, sir, that a decision might be reached on this question?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, probably within a week.

Q Within a week.

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) But don't hold me to it.

Q Mr. President, have you heard anything from Mr. (Harry) Hopkins or General (George C.) Marshall, or do you expect to?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have had a report of progress.

Q Anything from Jesse Jones (Secretary of Commerce) or Eugene Meyer (publisher of The Washington Post) since their fight?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no news. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you in a neutral corner on that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you in a neutral corner on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope they don't make me the umpire -- (more laughter) -- or the referee. That would be bad.

Q Are you counting time?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you counting time?

THE PRESIDENT: (the President laughed in reply) However, I can say this, but not for quotation: I hope that there won't be a second round. (laughter)

Q I think we have got to put it on the sports page.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you think we ought to put it on the sports page?

THE PRESIDENT: (softly) Yes.

Q Mr. President, how are we to take that remark, that there should be no second round?

(the President laughed in reply)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC, Page 85 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #819
Executive Office of the President
April 14, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M.,E.W.T.

Q Good afternoon, sir.

Q This is the best -- best baseball weather yet.

THE PRESIDENT: You bet it is. Don't rub it in. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a -- I would almost say a request to make. The U. S. O., and the Red Cross, and the American Library Association have sponsored a campaign to provide 10 million books for soldiers, sailors and Marines wherever they may be, and they are planning to have Friday, April 17, as Victory Book Day. This campaign has been going on for a short time, and they have already got 5 million books for the soldiers, sailors and Marines, and they want 5 million more.

The plan is that on Friday the milkman, the bakery, the department store delivery truck, and everybody else, is to be authorized to pick up the books. And school children, boys and girls in high schools and colleges will be asked to bring books for the fighting men to their school on that day. Motion picture houses are going to collect books on that day. And this campaign has already had a great deal of support from many newspapers throughout the country, who have put on the "Give a Book" campaign. They deserve a word of thanks, plus a request to renew their efforts, and the efforts of the radio people, to carry on until the needed 10 million books are in the hands of the armed forces of the country.

So that is a word of encouragement to all of you to get in on this campaign.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you have any suggestions as to what sort of books should be contributed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Anything -- except algebras. (laughter) Well, in other words, the kind of book that you would read in your own family. I suppose that is the easiest criterion -- interest you and the family.

Q Mr. President, is Governor (Herbert) Lehman of New York coming to Washington, or going to enter the Government in some official capacity?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I have never heard of it, except from newspaper stories.

Q (interposing) Do you think it would be a good idea?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The only information I have whatsoever.

Q Mr. President, have you found a name yet for the global war?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I took it up with the -- I talked to the meeting of the Pan American Union, and the Ambassadors and Ministers of our sister Republics this morning about it, and I suggested a name myself -- The Survival War.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Survival?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I always liked the idea. What was said this morning, it was taken down, and Steve has it for you. (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: Afterwards.

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as you have finished you can get it.

Q Mr. President, is that going to be it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is it officially named?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I just threw that name out. They liked it.

Q Mr. President, speaking of newspaper stories, there is also one that

Joseph Kennedy might come back to take some kind of job in connection ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I also read that in the newspapers.

Q You don't know any more ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Certain papers. I wouldn't say that was a connotation of what I have in mind for all newspapers by any means. The connotation might apply to a few papers.

MR. GODWIN: One paper started off that story by beating the life out of him. Was that the story that you read?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I don't know.

Q Mr. President, anything new on the over-all inflation -- anti-inflation campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We are working on it right along.

Q Is there a Message going up on it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there a Message to go to Congress on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't made up my mind as to date or method. I wish you could -- all of you -- give up the word "inflation," because very few people know what it means. Very few people in this room know what it means. I am not quite clear myself, so I am not using the word.

Q What word are you using? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You will see, in time.

Q Having a contest to name it? (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, are our relations with Vichy going to be changed as a result of the difficulties there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think you will have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, there is a great deal of disturbed feeling in Australia as reflected by dispatches by American correspondents from there, as to the authority that General (Douglas) MacArthur has, and as to what naval forces are at his disposal. Could you tell us, sir, whether ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can only tell you in a negative way, that there has been again one -- and I am thinking of one especially -- I don't know whether he is in the room at the present time or not. There has been singularly little error -- there has been overwhelming correctness on the part of the Press in talking about the command of General MacArthur. There has been a very minor part of the Press or newspapers which have -- I trust not deliberately -- completely falsified what I did say the other day.

What I have in mind is that this particular little group has talked about the command of the Pacific being under General MacArthur. Of course, any reference to the stenographic minutes of the Press Conference will show that nothing like that was said. (See Press Conferences 812 of March 17, page 5 on, and 815 of March 31, page 5 on).

The word was Southwest Pacific. And that is true today, as it was when I stated it two or three weeks ago.

I think that's all that need be said -- Southwest Pacific.

Q In other words, he has full authority there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: In Southwest Pacific.

Q Including naval?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Including naval?

THE PRESIDENT: Including naval.

Q Does that include New Zealand?

THE PRESIDENT: Well now, there is -- there is a difficult thing, because there are operational problems down there which might be affected by an actual public statement as to just where the area command began and where it ended. I could cite two or three examples of that, which you would readily understand if I were to cite them. But for operational reasons we can't talk in terms of whether this particular -- I am not saying New Zealand, I am thinking of the other islands -- little bits of islands -- as to whether they fall into one zone or fall into the other zone. They may or they may not. And it is better to have the enemy do the guessing than for us to tell them.

Q Does that difficulty apply also to the Fiji Islands and New Caledonia?

THE PRESIDENT: All of the islands down through there. I should think probably the rule of common sense would govern when I say Southwest Pacific.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox told a Congressional committee today that an executive labor policy will soon be formulated and announced. Is there anything you could tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess you could make a pretty good guess that it is all tied up with that word -- vile word that you used.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Paul used.

THE PRESIDENT: Paul used -- inflation.

Q Mr. President, has any directive been sent to the War Labor Board to hold wage rulings in future cases to wave levels, or existing wage levels?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would such a directive -- is that contemplated at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I really honestly don't know.

Q Can you tell us, sir, whether this unnamed program includes more taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You can tell us whether it does?

THE PRESIDENT: It does, sure.

Q Is there any other name ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) When I say more taxes I mean a new tax bill.

Q Beyond the one now pending, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Beyond the present tax law.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) For forty ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Beyond the present tax law. In other words, it has not been determined at all as to whether the recommendations of the Treasury which were made in -- what was it? -- March, early March, would be added to or not. I don't know on that. But the present -- the present pending bill as it is today is a very steep increase over the present law.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you comment or expand on the Executive Order today, giving the Board of Economic Warfare new authority?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it explains itself. It is to give the authority to that Board to direct certain purchases of materials outside of this country, thereby centralizing the responsibility in their hands.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, getting back to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That doesn't mean, of course, necessarily they will carry it out. Theirs would be a directive that would be carried out -- purchases -- by perhaps certain other agencies of the Government. It centralizes the policy in their hands.

Q Mr. President, getting back to the inflation -- delete -- inflation program, does that contemplate any further savings in non-defense expenditures?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. I had an awfully funny time on that. There was a very, very famous economist who wrote to me about it -- a very serious person, a very old friend of mine, I like him a lot -- and he put his question to me just as you put yours. In other words, a generality.

And I wrote him back, "Have you got a copy of the Budget? If not, I will send you one. Tell me where?" Well, that was 6 weeks ago, and he has written me 3 letters since, and he hasn't answered the question. So my question of course is to you just where it would be to him: Where? In what particular? What is a non-defense expenditure?

Q Does that mean, Mr. President, there will not be any? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is like one of his three replies to me. It begs the question which I asked.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, you are very familiar, I presume, with the list of -- of items that Senator (Harry) Byrd (Democrat, of Virginia) and his Committee have put up.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) You have no comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, let me give you a very, very simple example. I think on that list was the abolishing of the whole of N.Y.A.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) All right. Now at the present time N.Y.A. is training about 400 thousand boys and girls each year to go into industry. All right. Now, if we abolish N.Y.A. we have to set up something else to train 400 thousand people.

Query: Where is the economy?

Now that is a very good example. And of course that is a necessary part of the war work. I don't care where they are trained. Heavens, you can put them under -- Oh, Heavens, I don't care -- if you want to you can put them under the Secretary of State.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) The point is ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't care where it is, as long as I get 400 thousand trained boys and girls.

MR. GODWIN: I see.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how about some of the farm subsidies?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about some of the farm subsidies? Are they so necessary in view of the high farm prices now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, as you approach parity you get away from farm subsidies, don't you?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q In that connection, will it be necessary, sir, to change the prices at all in connection with farm prices, in order to stop this evil word -- inflation? Do you think that the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, because the farm parity level is based on -- Oh -- a form of index, and if the index doesn't go up, the farm prices don't go up, based on parity.

Q Mr. President, did you notice the statement a little while ago of Senator (Kenneth) McKellar (Democrat of Tennessee), that no training was needed for boys to fight forest fires?

THE PRESIDENT: No what?

Q No training. In opposing the C.C.C., he said that no training was needed for forest fire fighters, that all they needed was numbers.

THE PRESIDENT: The unfortunate part is that forest fires occur in some States that "ain't got" numbers. That is a pretty good answer. A lot of places up in -- well, let's say Idaho, where I suppose there are many hundreds of square miles with nobody in that area, not one human being. I don't know how you fight fire in a place like that.

Q I have heard they needed training.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I heard they needed training.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they do need some training too.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Thank you, sir.

(Notebook VIII-Page 97-JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #820
Executive Office of the President
April 21, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M.,E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is Steve?

MR. EARLY: Here.

THE PRESIDENT: What have you got?

MR. EARLY: The Leo Crowley material.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all?

MR. EARLY: Nothing else that I can find. Nothing else that I can find.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing to himself and indicating a document in Chinese) That's Chinese. I will leave it face up.

Yes. It's all right. (for the newspapermen to come in)

Q Do we get all those? (indicating the large pile of papers in front of the President)

THE PRESIDENT: You may need them -- those are pardons! (laughter) You stepped right into it. (more laughter)

Q Is there anything prophetic ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q I hope there is nothing prophetic about that.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not.

Q Well, I want to talk to you about that anyway.

Q (indicating the Chinese document) Can you read that red and black one over there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's from the Generalissimo. That's why I left it face up. (laughter)

Q Dave Lu is over here. (David Lu, Central News Agency of China)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Dave Lu is over here.

MR. EARLY: Dave will read it. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It's all right. I wouldn't mind that at all.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have very little today. I have one that I talked to Leo Crowley about yesterday, in regard to alien enemy-owned patents. And the Alien Property Custodian says that already a great many of them have come into his possession, especially in the chemical and the pharmaceutical field, and several thousand more will be acquired by them in the course of the next few months.

We talked it over, and I asked him to take the necessary steps to make available for war production and national needs all patents that are controlled either directly or indirectly by our enemies, and that these patents should be made freely available for war purposes and national needs, and that there should be a continuation or new research started in connection with their maintenance and expansion. So he is starting in to do that, and to make an exhaustive survey of every known kind of enemy-controlled patent. We think that a great many of them, actually owned or controlled by enemies, are ostensibly in the hands of neutrals, or allies, or American citizens.

Q Mr. President, you mean to say, sir, that their ownership of these foreign patents has been ostensibly transferred to an American citizen, but that will not prevent their seizure?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is ostensible ownership.

Q Yes, sir.

Q In that same situation there has been brought out before one of the Senate committees -- indicating that some of these patent agreements between German and American firms have clauses which would provide for their resumption after the war ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and it seems to be a moot question as to whether action by the Alien Property Custodian now will affect post-war use. Do you intend to take them and keep them for us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, in view of the past experience of this Government. During the World War we took over alien enemy-owned patents, etcetera, and after the war was over we took no steps to keep them from sliding back one way or the other into alien hands. And I think that that should be prevented -- a recurrence of that at the end of this war.

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, what about bona fide American patents that are pooled with foreign patents -- with enemy alien patents -- and are needed for the production of the materials?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my idea is we take everything we need, no matter what the technicalities are. The first thing to do is to win the war.

Q Can we imply from that, sir, that you would favor this Bone bill that is in the Senate now? (Homer T. Bone, Democrat, of Washington)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us something about the Pacific Council meeting this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: It went off very well.

Q Understand there was a report by Mr. (Harry) Hopkins of his trip?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's right.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, will these patents be made available to all

United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Will the patents be made available to all the United Nations, or will we keep them?

THE PRESIDENT: For war purposes, Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, does that also include something on the international cartels? That is where the patents were tied up. Could you say whether legislation was needed to find out where these patents are? I mean there are apparently very secret cartel agreements, and they have secrecy clauses, and freezing clauses, and that they are not to divulge these patents and secrets to anybody.

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I don't know the technicalities of it. I just suggest -- Lord, if we need them we are going to get them, if we can find them.

Q Mr. President, couldn't you use some of the War Powers Act authority to take those patents, even if they are final?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Take it as property?

THE PRESIDENT: Take it as property, because after all it is a property.

MR. D. CORNELL: Speaking of taking over things, Mr. President, do you think there is any need for a certain amount of fear on the part of the public, that their private cars might be taken by the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of that at all.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Coming back to Mr. Hopkins, Mr. President, there has been a report that there will be a joint supply, or joint production council -- commission set up between the United States and the United Kingdom, as a result of Lord Beaverbrook's return here. Is anything like that in the wind at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard of anything like that. I think that we are developing existing machinery pretty well on that, and also the machinery on -- on what I call allocations. It is really the -- the distribution of the material when it is -- when it is ready, and along the general line of giving opportunity to different nations actively engaged in the war, such as the Chinese and the Australians, to be heard, and make a case, before the final distribution is decided on.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Well, through what mechanism does that clear?

THE PRESIDENT: That goes through the distribution committee, as long as it is in line with the decisions on the military end.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: I must admit I am not quite sure what -- just what is the construction of this distribution committee?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's Mr. Hopkins here. He is the chairman of it. That's the primary consideration -- the distribution of our own things. And then there are representatives of the British on it, and I think the -- I don't know -- you fellows will have to check. Find out who else is on it.

MR. EARLY: It has been announced.

Q Are you referring to the Munitions Assignments Board?

MR. EARLY: It has been announced, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: It has been announced.

Q We were not familiar with it under that title.

THE PRESIDENT: The Munitions Assignments Board. The only -- the only thing is that we are giving the opportunity to other United Nations to be heard by that Board.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conference last week with --

with Joseph Kennedy?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I had a very pleasant talk. That was all.

Q Is there some thought of his being brought into the Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, have you any comment on Pierre Laval?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I had better not. (laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: One of his complaints is that the British are bombing French territory. Is he likely to have any complaint of that sort against the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there any comment you can make on the -- on the recent developments in the Southwest Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any what?

Q Comments that you could make, on any of the recent developments in the Southern Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so, except I can suggest that people shouldn't believe what they read in certain papers.

MR. F. PERKINS: How about the -- the -- the -- the story about the bombing of Tokio?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the only thing I can think of is -- on that -- you know occasionally I have a few people in to dinner, and generally in the middle of dinner some -- I know she isn't -- it isn't an individual, it's just a generic term -- some "sweet young thing" says, "Mr. President, couldn't you tell us about so and so?"

Well, the other night this "sweet young thing" in the middle of supper said, "Mr. President, couldn't you tell us about that bombing? Where did those planes start from and go to?"

And I said, "Yes. I think the time has now come to tell you. They came from our new secret base at Shangri-La!" (laughter)

And she believed it! (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is this the same young lady you talked about --- (loud laughter interrupted)

THE PRESIDENT: No. This is a generic term. It happens to be a woman.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Is it always feminine? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Is it always feminine? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Now May, why did you ask me that?

MISS MAY CRAIG: I wondered.

THE PRESIDENT: I call it a "sweet young thing." Now when I talk about manpower that includes the women, and when I talk about a "sweet young thing," that includes young men. (again loud laughter)

Q Do you have those kind of men ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) In the House? (meaning the White House) (more loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Romagna) What did he say?

MR. ROMAGNA: In the House. (the President laughed heartily)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and the Senate too. (more loud laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: Would you care to go so far, Mr. President, as to admit that this Japanese ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Wait a minute -- wait a minute. "The President Admits" -- there's the headline. (laughter) Go ahead now.

MR. F. PERKINS: Would you care to go so far as to confirm the truth of the Japanese reports that Tokio was bombed?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I couldn't even do that. I am depending on Japanese reports very largely. (laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, is there any reason to doubt the report of the Chilean ambassador to Chile -- (laughter) -- Japan, that there was a bombing?

THE PRESIDENT: The killing of what? (more laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: The report of the Chilean ambassador to his own government that Japan was bombed?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That didn't get to me yet.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. EARLY: (to the newspapermen as they filed out) Sweet little things! (laughter)

Q Steve, does he mean to imply that Fred Perkins is a sweet little thing? (continued laughter)

(Notebook VIII-PC, page 109 -- JR)

Press Conference #820 -- April 21, 1942 -- Excerpts

THE PRESIDENT: I have very little today. I have one that I talked to Leo Crowley about yesterday, in regard to alien enemy-owned patents. And the Alien Property Custodian says that already a great many of them have come into his possession, especially in the chemical and the pharmaceutical field, and several thousand more will be acquired by them in the course of the next few months.

We talked it over, and I asked him to take the necessary steps to make available for war production and national needs all patents that are controlled either directly or indirectly by our enemies, and that these patents should be made freely available for war purposes and national needs, and that there should be a continuation or new research started in connection with their maintenance and expansion. So he is starting in to do that, and to make an exhaustive survey of every known kind of enemy-controlled patent. We think that a great many of them, actually owned or controlled by enemies, are ostensibly in the hands of neutrals, or allies, or American citizens.

Q. Mr. President, you mean to say, sir, that their ownership of these foreign patents has been ostensibly transferred to an American citizen, but that will not prevent their seizure?

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Q. (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is ostensible ownership.

Q. Yes, sir.

Q. In that same situation there has been brought out before one of the Senate committees -- indicating that some of these patent agreements between German and American firms have clauses which would provide for their resumption after the war ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q. (continuing) --- and it seems to be a moot question as to whether action by the Alien Property Custodian now will affect post-war use. Do you intend to take them and keep them for us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, in view of the past experience of this Government. During the World War we took over alien enemy-owned patents, etcetera, and after the war was over we took no steps to keep them from sliding back one way or the other into alien hands. And I think that that should be prevented -- a recurrence of that at the end of this war.

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THE PRESIDENT: Well, my idea is we take everything we need, no matter what the technicalities are. The first thing to do is to win the war.

Q. Can we imply from that, sir, that you would favor this Bone bill that is in the Senate now? (Homer T. Bone, Democrat, of Washington)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. I don't know.

(and then further on)

Q. Mr. President, will these patents be made available to all United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

Q. Will the patents be made available to all the United Nations, or will we keep them?

THE PRESIDENT: For war purposes, Yes.

Q. Mr. President, does that also include something on the international cartels? That is where the patents were tied up. Could you say whether legislation was needed to find out where these patents are? I mean there are apparently very secret cartel agreements, and they have secrecy clauses, and freezing clauses, and that they are not to divulge these patents and secrets to anybody.

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I don't know the technicalities of it. I just suggest -- Lord, if we need them we are going to get them, if we can find them..

Q. Mr. President, couldn't you use some of the War Powers Act authority to take those patents, even if they are final?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q. Take it as property?

THE PRESIDENT: Take it as property, because after all it is a property.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #821
Executive Office of the President
April 24, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M.,E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: It's going to be a very dull Press Conference. I haven't got anything, and I don't know "nothin'."

Q Good morning.

Q Good morning, sir.

Q Do you know the reporter over here, Mr. President? (indicating Mr. Fred Shipman, Director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. He sees that the record is adequately kept for future generations.

Q I think he is doing a pretty good job on it.

MR. EARLY: (to Earl Godwin) Have you been out West?

MR. GODWIN: No, not West, down South a little. I wasn't here the last time because I was asleep.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid this is going to be a very barren day. I haven't anything, Steve hasn't got anything, and I don't think any of you have got anything. (laughter) Have you got any ideas?

Q Mr. President, what are your plans for registering on Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I think probably there will be a photograph taken. That's a good guess. (laughter)

Q Do you expect it will be done here?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Yes.

Q Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, have the other members of the manpower commission been nominated to you along with the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- Executive Director?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Any news today, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) On what?

Q (continuing) Isthere any news today from Shangri-La? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing at all, except that evidently one of the planes which came out of Shangri-La didn't get back there. It went across to visit Russia.

Q Will that become a Lend-Lease plane now, Mr. President? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I read in the papers that it had been -- what do you call it? -- officially interned at ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Interned. Have you any official note of that sir? Has it come to you officially?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Same thing. Just what you got.

MR. GODWIN: Just what we got.

Q From the Soviet government?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q From the Soviet government?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Could it be interned on the Kalinin front?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could it be interned on the Kalinin front?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No. I have nothing else you haven't got on it.

MR. GODWIN: What, Mr. President, might -- is there something going to be done about it, or is it a detail, this plane?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it has been interned. That's all. Yes.

MR. GODWIN: That's all there is to it.

Q Mr. President, we were given to understand that the names of the Americans on the ship had been forwarded to Washington. Is there any possibility they will be released?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. Probably not.

Q Mr. President, when you intern a ship like that, do you immobilize it?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so. I don't know.

Q Well, sir, the Soviet communication to Washington then would tend to confirm the Tokio announcements that the raid took place.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that doesn't require any answer. You didn't put it in the form of a question. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there are complaints in Tokio that our Army and Navy are keeping too quiet. Could you do anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I read that too.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your plans for this labor division of the War Production Board? Do you -- who, for example, do you plan to have the head of that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't done anything about it. I am going to see Donald Nelson about it today or tomorrow.

Q Has everybody been guessing right about your speech Monday -- Message?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I did some work on it yesterday -- Message to Congress, and I will work on it today and tomorrow -- Sunday. It is not nearly ready.

Q Do you expect it will go up Monday, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, have you evolved your own term to replace "anti-inflation"?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think so. I think "cost of living" is easiest. Most of you guessed it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, have you anything to say about (Rear Admiral) Emory Land's testimony with reference to loafing in shipyards?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't read it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: He has twice testified that this program of shipbuilding has been slowed down by that.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, I wouldn't -- I don't believe he said that, Jim. Well, of course, it depends on the words "slow down." I don't know what ---

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interposing) He said loafing -- the word "loafing."

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but was that general?

Q He applied it to both management and labor.

MR. GODWIN: What he said, sir, was that there was too damn much loafing in the shipyards.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good burr under the tail for both labor and management. It's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Then the National Maritime Union got after him about it, and they are still rowing.

THE PRESIDENT: I see.

Q The net of it is though, Mr. President, that that seems to be the one part of the war program that isn't up to schedule, and that is the big bottleneck, apparently, in the picture right at this minute. And I thought probably you would ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I suppose really before you could write a general story, you ought to find out what percentage of not only shipping but any other part of the program which does this loafing of the -- what percentage of the slow down over what it ought to be. And I don't believe that it is on the whole very great. You probably can take an individual plant and get a higher percentage, but a general statement of that kind isn't worth an awful lot unless you know more facts.

Q Mr. President, he also said that the slow down was due to shortages of steel plate. Do you have any personal knowledge of that or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. There is a shortage of steel plates all over the country, and we have had for a long time.

Q Mr. President, Admiral Land testified before one of the Congressional committees that the amount by which they were behind their schedule could be traced to the shortage of steel, dating from last fall until the first of March. Would you have any idea of what might be the relative importance of that and the supposed slow down?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would say the primary steel -- the primary reason for being behind the schedule is the shortage of steel -- I don't think there is any question about that -- not coming through nearly as fast as it ought to come through.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Well, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is a certain amount of converting of strip mills. They are using new processes, turning their -- converting quite a number of -- not plants but portions of plants, to turn out more plates and shapes. But of course we have to remember that the Shipping Board program -- the Maritime Commission program has very, very greatly increased, and so has the Navy program. And with the two of them put together, there is just a plain shortage of shapes and plates.

Q Mr. President, are you planning any action to revitalize the shipbuilding program? It does seem to be the one branch of the four goals about which we know, that is, airplanes, tanks and anti-aircraft guns -- it seems to be the one which is behind.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would say that most everybody is working on that thing at the present time. You can't make bread without flour.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, the Chairman of the Board -- the Admiral -- indicated, I think, quite frankly, that he believed or intended to have someone believe that part -- part of that plate shortage could be attributed to priorities, that somebody got the steel that they needed. Now that may be true and it may not. Do you know anything about that, or do you know -- do you care to say anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have got to have -- priorities affect the whole program. Anybody that doesn't get what they want the day they want it begin to shout about priorities. That is obvious.

MR. GODWIN: If the shipyard doesn't get the steel, they don't get the steel. That really slows it up.

THE PRESIDENT: If the tank shop doesn't get the steel, they don't get the steel.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, if the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Of course, there is one thing that I have been working at -- pleading with the production people to check up on, and W.P.B. (War Production Board), and that is the civilian use of steel, which I personally consider too high. I think they have been letting out among the priorities too much steel for civilian use. Now they said they haven't. They said the only steel -- civilian steel they let out is for ultimate war production. Now they are checking up on that.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us in an over-all way how the war production program is moving along, without revealing ---

THE PRESIDENT: I would say, considering the fact that it was called a fantastic program in January, that it was working out extremely well.

Q Mr. President, is anything being done to increase the over-all capacity of the steel industry as a whole?

THE PRESIDENT: I have forgotten ---

Q (adding) New mills?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to check on that. You had better check. I have forgotten how many million tons of new capacity is being built -- plants or additions to plants are being built this year. It's quite a sizeable amount.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It takes about a year to build a steel plant.

Q (interjecting) Also takes considerable steel.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And it takes a lot of steel too.

Q Have you heard anything, by the way, from the people that said there was plenty of steel about a year ago?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there was at that time for the program.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's the thing they not often visualized -- what the program was. Nobody had any conception -- nobody in the United States -- what this new program would be -- this January program. The year before that there wasn't anybody ever thought of a possibility of that kind. Most -- a great many people didn't in January of this year. They called it fantastic.

Q Mr. President, have you had reports on the fact that some aircraft companies have had to lay off large numbers of men because of bottlenecks along the line?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You haven't gone into that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, what was your personal reaction to the action of the Republican (National) Committee at Chicago, apparently withdrawing from the principles of Isolationism?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you off the record: I didn't read it. (laughter)

Q Didn't even hear it on the air, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard anything on the air. I didn't even hear you (Earl Godwin) for a week.

MR. GODWIN: I don't see how you can carry on your job. (laughter) I want to ask you a question, sir, which may be perfectly obvious. When you speak of building the plants -- the steel plants, and it takes so long, could you say, or could we believe -- could the public know that when these proposed plants are built that their output is not -- that it will meet the requirements of this tremendous program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not necessarily.

MR. GODWIN: You couldn't say that?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't say that, because by that time we might have an additional program.

Q Mr. President, the steel industry already says that a shortage of scrap is confining them somewhat in their production. Now with this additional production coming along, how are you going -- are you making any plans for solving that additional scrap problem?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think the scrap problem is a very serious one. There is still a good deal of scrap in this country.

Q (interjecting) Maybe we can get some back from Japan.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is plenty of scrap in this country. You can get by all right. If you go on a railroad train, for example -- just to use a simple example -- they have what they call empty car sidings -- not switches but sidings -- old rails which have been down 20 or 30 years. Now they have not been taken up yet. Why keep them there? We haven't got any empty freight cars to put on them. Well, we have got people that are trying to use their heads, trying to discover things like empty sidings. I suggested that as one of mine. I suggested that about a week ago. Why I never thought -- now there are a good many other sources with a lot of scrap steel -- on farms. There is still some scrap steel in the woods. Well, I went driving the other day through certain woods, sometime ago when I was at Hyde Park, and I found -- I hadn't thought of it at all -- an old what you call a dump, right in my own woods. And there were 8 or 10 old farm machines -- and an old farm truck. What they were doing was trying to fill up the swamp. And we are taking steps to haul it out of the swamp and convert it into scrap. Now there is a lot of that all over the country.

Q Mr. President, one suggestion has been made that they use W.P.A. labor to take up these abandoned street-car rails. It is a very costly operation. In many places they have just put the asphalt over the rails.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Could that W.P.A. -- has that suggestion been brought to your notice, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard of that one. That is a good one. I will pass it along.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, do you have any comment on Lord Beaverbrook's recommendation last night, that we attack?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't read it, May. I didn't know it. I read the main headline, and stopped there. I have had very little time this morning to read the papers thoroughly.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC, page 120 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #822
Executive Office of the President
April 28, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why everybody is coming in. If this gets any bigger we will have to move out on the lawn this summer. Didn't we do it once?

MR. GODWIN: For pictures you did. You did it for pictures one day.

THE PRESIDENT: Was that it?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Godwin says I have nothing. (laughter) He is not always right, but it's all right.

MR. D. CORNELL: Mr. President, in your Message yesterday you said that everybody's dimes and dollars not absolutely needed for vital necessities ought to be put into War Bonds and Stamps. There is a limit of 5 thousand dollars that an individual can purchase in a year on small Bonds, and 50 thousand on the big. What is going to be done about it -- this limit, if anything?

THE PRESIDENT: Put them into the big Bonds. How much on big Bonds?

MR. D. CORNELL: 50 thousand on the big ones. Personally that isn't worrying me considerably. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It's going to worry less of you and me and other millionaires next year. As a matter of fact, of course, what I am talking about is not investing previous investments in War Bonds. I am talking about investing earnings in War Bonds -- current income. There isn't very much use after all, if you have got a thousand dollars in the savings bank which is probably doing pretty useful work somewhere, taking it out of the savings bank and putting it into Government Bonds. Now, of course, any people that have got larger current incomes than 55 thousand dollars, which I think you total up -- might be some difficulty.

Q I am sure everybody here would appreciate it if they would lift the limit of 12 hundred dollars on tax anticipation notes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think there is a lot in that. I don't know. You had better ask the Treasury about that.

Q Well, in connection with the Bonds, Mr. President, would they be considered as taxes for purchases over the 25 thousand net income proposed, or would people have to buy them out of that 25 thousand that is left.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you will have to ask the Treasury -- technical question. Those are details. Remember yesterday I said something about details.

Q Mr. President, in connection with that, you remember you were very generous a couple of weeks ago in translating Mr. (James) Landis' (O.C.D.) "termination of the illumination" as "turn out the lights." How about "stabilize the remuneration"? (laughter) Can you translate that one for us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are going to get it tonight. (more laughter) You just hold your horses until about quarter-past ten. In other words, about half-way through the speech.

Q Mr. President, in your Budget Seminar you spoke about the desirability of getting "calendar" and "fiscal" year straightened out, and having them coincide -- something of that sort. Have you done anything about it since sometime in January?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have spoken about it to some influential people who pass laws. And nothing has happened yet.

Q They are not getting anywhere?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. (It would) make it easier for all of us, you know. A year would be a year.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, have you, or will you issue a Directive to the War Labor Board asking them to stabilize wages?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a detail, Pete.

MR. P. BRANDT: Pretty big one.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Lots of big ones. That's not the only one.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, if I could get rather personal, I would like to know how you are getting along with the wooden coal barges?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard, May, for about a week. They said they have got -- I think they listed 19 places that were capable of building them, that used to build them in the old days. Now how many of the 19 will be put to work on them, I couldn't tell you.

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that all of the tankers would be taken out of the East Coast Atlantic. Could you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it at all.

(pause)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #823
Executive Office of the President
May 1, 1942 -- 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

Q Good morning.

Q Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's the first of May. End of the coat for a while.

(the President was not wearing his coat)

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have had a -- an informal report from Mr. (Paul V.) McNutt on a thing we talked about before, and that was registration of women. He has consulted with the Social -- the women members of Social Security Board's Federal Advisory Council, and with other Government officials, and they are agreed that at the present time we ought not to have a -- a registration of women.

Then, he says, the conclusion is based on a careful study of the current and potential demand for women workers, in relation to the numbers of both men and women who are now available for and seeking work. Over the whole country -- over the country as a whole there are more women workers who want and are available for jobs than there are job openings for them at the present time.

Almost a million and a half women workers are now registered with the offices of the Employment Service as being available for work. They believe that they are being given and should be given an increasing opportunity to serve. Pre-employment training of women for industrial jobs is being rapidly expanded. Any woman now has an opportunity to register voluntarily for work at any one of the United States -- 15 hundred United States Employment offices. And the Advisory group further recommends that State laws and regulations covering the conditions of women's work should be preserved and extended in those States which are -- which haven't got enough in the way of women's laws, such as the total number of hours a week, and the One Day Rest In Seven, and other meal and rest periods, and proper safeguards for health and safety. And that they -- so they recommend that nothing further should be done at this time. That is not a permanent thing, of course, but -- at this time.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, I noticed in the morning papers that (Brigadier) General (Lewis B.) Hershey talked about registering boys from 18 to 20. Sometime ago you were having a study made as to whether the law should be changed so as to make that class available for military duty. Have you reached any conclusion?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had any report yet, Jim. That's the first I have heard of it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nothing has come to me.

Q Is there anything said in that report about the number of States which were below par?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, you are accepting the recommendations -- I mean to the holding up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, at this time.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President -- Mr. President, you have noticed this Housing program -- you had your Housing heads in here yesterday. It would appear from what we read that the House of Representatives did not appropriate for a Housing program that was up to your original expectations. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

MR. GODWIN: Would you like to say something on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and they are going to try all they can to get the Senate to restore the amount that we asked for, because I think it is very much needed.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. May I go back to the McNutt matter? In those employment agencies where I have had any knowledge at all on the subject, most of the women were applying for non-industrial jobs. They were office and housekeeping -- housework jobs. That figure of a million and a half might not mean that they were there asking for war jobs. Does that mean anything to you at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, apparently they feel that enough of them are applying for war jobs to take care of the situation at the present time. It doesn't mean that a million and a half are applying for machine tool jobs.

And I have a -- I think Steve told you yesterday about these checks that are coming in to help win the war. And I have one check here -- a money order for $107.50. I think it is a pretty good illustration of a great many of these that are coming in.

Here is a man with a wife and three children. (reading):

> "We realize that wars cost money, and can only be won by sacrifice and loyalty to one's Government and those gallant boys who die for us, but not in vain. I registered yesterday with the 45 to 64 class along with the President. Tonight our President casually mentioned a casual air-raid on Japan. I would like to hear of more of them in due time. (laughter)
>
> "As a self-sacrifice and appreciation of what is being done for us, I and my wife are sending half our life savings to

> our Government, to be used for another bomber to blast our enemies in repayment for Pearl Harbor. Our bank account is just $215.00. So we send a check for $107.50, and I promise to buy War Bonds till it hurts. The $107.50 is our family's contribution to the bomber."

Q Mr. President, could you tell us the occupation of that man?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. He doesn't mention it.

Q What city is it from, sir, can you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not giving out names -- any of these names. It might be called an invidious distinction. There are an awful lot of them. If I gave out one it would be a bit unfair for all the others I didn't mention. It's just typical of the many letters coming in.

Q Would you care to comment on the condition of the contents of the basket? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, most of it has been -- has been done, because most of the stuff is for file.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether you discussed this B.E.W. Order with Secretary Hull yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Are you planning any modifications?

THE PRESIDENT: Wouldn't call them modifications. I would say -- I would say clarifications.

Q Will that tend to give the State Department the amount of authority it should have in that field?

THE PRESIDENT: The way I would put it is this -- instead of putting it that way, I would say that there is no question that the State Department is in charge of the foreign affairs of the United States. Some people haven't quite realized that fact. Some people in other departments of the Government want to run foreign affairs. Legally they can't.

When it comes to certain financing in other countries, of course, that is a purely administrative job. And I suppose the easiest illustration I can use on it is -- well, I don't know whether this should be off the record or not. I don't think it makes an awful lot of difference.

You take the problem of getting out -- getting rubber. We don't grow any rubber in this country. There is a lot of wild rubber and several other trees down in Mexico, for instance, that you can get sap out of that does make rubber. And the policy was, up to a few months ago, to offer a very high price for that rubber. In other words, a purely financial matter. And we tried it out. We supposed that if we offered a price that was higher than the market, the rubber would be forthcoming out of the forests.

Well, they were very grateful for this offer of a higher price, but the rubber did not come out of the forests. The B.E.W. very properly -- because it wasn't coming out -- recommended that we organize a -- what might be called a business operation -- a procurement operation is the correct word, to go down there and organize crews that would go into the forests and bring out the rubber, because the previous method hadn't -- hadn't got what we hoped for.

Now on that -- in this Order as I signed it, it wasn't clear, quite frankly. The negotiations with our sister Republics ought to go, obviously, through the State Department. The actual operation, after the negotiations had been completed, was with the sister Republic. The actual operation of procurement would be done by B.E.W., because the State Department, obviously, is not a procurement agency.

Well, there was some question as to how the negotiations should be carried on with our sister Republics, and I think that is going to be clarified. As I said, the State Department does remain in charge of our foreign relations.

Q Well, I take it, Mr. President, that it would be clarified by some kind of directive?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. A letter, or an amendment to the Order. It doesn't make much difference which way.

Q Mr. President, I wondered if you had had an opportunity to read Stalin's speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't.

Q Mr. President, have there been any reactions in Vichy to your remarks the other evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a peep yet. (laughter) I suppose there will be.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, it might be a detail entirely, but when you were speaking of this rubber and the expedition to get it, that is wild rubber, isn't it ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- that is jungle rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that this -- some of you people who cover the State Department might know -- and B.E.W. A great many years ago -- 25 years ago, when the price of rubber was very, very high, a lot of people got together and planted these trees. I know a great many of them in Haiti -- in Mexico. Some of them were planted in Haiti -- not rubber trees. I can't think of the name -- (phonetically) ka-reel-eo? (Castilla?)

Q Guayule?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. Guayule is a plant not a tree.

The State Department will tell you. Sumner Welles knows all about it. And these trees -- the people who put them in found that they didn't -- they wouldn't pay for a long time. And then now they are 25 to 30 years old, which is the ideal time. But they have been allowed to run wild. In other words, the companies that put them there went out of business. And there are the trees in out-of-the-way places, and we hope to be able to go in and tap them.

Q Any appreciable number of them, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Any appreciable number of them?

THE PRESIDENT: Quite a lot. I was surprised.

Q Mr. President, is that (phonetically) Kos-tee-a? (Castilla?)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q (phonetically) Kos-tee-a? (Castilla?)

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's it. Something like that. I don't know how to spell it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, can you tell us where you got all those good human interest stories the other night -- that we can't get? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, I will tell you -- I will tell you off the record, entirely off the record -- what happened.

Monday night I was sitting upstairs, going over the fifth draft of the speech, and I said, "My God, I want some human interest in this." And Harry Hopkins was sitting over in the corner. He said, "Why don't we see if they haven't got some real stories in the Army and Navy?"

Q (interjecting) We tried that! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I know you have.

Well, there was a lot there that I did not use. Well, I called up (Captain) John McCrea that same night, about nine o'clock, and he went around to the Navy, and sent word to the Army. And by ten o'clock Tuesday morning we had those stories, and three or four others which I did not use. And I -- I agree with you absolutely that we are not handling human interest stories of that kind in the right way.

Q That would be grand if we could ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It would be grand if we could get them. There is no reason in God's world why you shouldn't. Those stories have been over there on this for -- I don't know -- several weeks ---

Q (interjecting) I know it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and you fellows ought to have had them.

Q We don't get them.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it. I have been yelling -- I have been yelling about it ever since. I hope you will get them. I won't guarantee anything.

Q If you will yell, sir, we will get them.

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

Q You say you have four of them. Couldn't you tell those now? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this check for $107.50 is one of them.

Q If they could give them out from time to time ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- it would really be grand.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, how is your plan for reorganizing the press services coming on?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming on pretty well. I am getting somewhere. I would say in about a week we are going to have something.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, when you reorganize, couldn't you coordinate Press Conferences so you wouldn't have three or four at one time in the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Couldn't I what?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Couldn't you coordinate the Press Conferences so that there wouldn't be two or three of them at one time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's what this meeting is for, to coordinate the Press Conferences.

MR. GODWIN: That's right.

Mr. President, there are one or two very bold Government officials that have called Press Conferences at 10.30 on Fridays, for instance.

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt did once. (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And where did you go, May?

MISS MAY CRAIG: I came here, and went late there. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, you said in your speech the other night that aid would be gotten to China under all circumstances. I wondered if, in view of the fall of Lashio at the end of the Burma Road, you could tell us if steps are already being taken in that direction, in a general way?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that might almost be called a military secret.

Q In a general way?

THE PRESIDENT: It's going along all right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC, Page 138 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #824
Executive Office of the President
May 5, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. Tell them to come --- (newspapermen begin to file in). Oh, here they are. (then turning to Mr. Early): Got anything for me?

MR. EARLY: All the news is off the record.

(long pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says I have nothing. Not a thing.

MR. EARLY: I said all the news is off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't even off the record. Too hush-hush for that.

Q Is there anything you can say on the Madagascar situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, if I -- the news this morning indicated, I think, that you had asked for reduced appropriations for certain things, including the C.C.C. and N.Y.A. Was that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Keeping -- keeping just the war activities.

MR. GODWIN: The last time you mentioned N.R.A. -- N.Y.A., you spoke of it as having produced a large number of trained machinists, I think you said.

THE PRESIDENT: About 400 thousand a year.

MR. GODWIN: How many?

THE PRESIDENT: 400 thousand.

MR. GODWIN: Would this reduction interfere with that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I think it keeps that going ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- or from some other source?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the only activity that is kept going.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us something about that special request you sent up in regard to the F.S.A. -- Farm Security?

THE PRESIDENT: What was that?

Q 120 million.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I don't know. (laughter) I don't recognize it.

Q The letter to (Vice President Henry) Wallace?

Q Mr. President, getting back to Madagascar, have you any information as to whether those cruisers, which were reputed here to have arrived in Madagascar or be on the way, were there -- the French cruisers?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. Except quite a long time ago -- I think they went out for the day and returned the same night. I am not sure, but that is my impression.

Q There was a report that they went to Madagascar.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is when they started in the morning, and I think they came back the same evening.

Q Could you say anything for the benefit of the gentlemen in Germany who want to know about the two battleships that went through the Suez Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. They are on the way to Shangri-La. (laughter)

Q Any news of activity there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Any news of activity there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are building a drydock there. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything in general about the meeting of the Pacific War Council?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It continued harmonious and successful in its operations.

I think that's about all the news. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

Q About a -- a -- a month ago you sent up the nomination, Mr. President, of Earle G. Harrison to be Commissioner of Immigration ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania announced that he didn't like the appointment and would oppose it. It has been held up there meanwhile, apparently with no action.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

Q That is what I wanted to ask you.

THE PRESIDENT: I am asking you. I certainly have not withdrawn it.

Q Would you care to say whether you have any intention of withdrawing it?

THE PRESIDENT: No intention of withdrawing it whatsoever.

Q Do you desire early action?

THE PRESIDENT: I do. (laughter) The reason is I think he is a good man for the place.

Q You don't think that the Senator's objections are any good then?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, you mentioned Social Security taxes in your speech the other night. Is that a part of the cost of living program, to increase Social Security taxes at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: It is part of the -- part of the tax -- the original January tax Message.

(pause)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

Q (aside) For what?

THE PRESIDENT: For what is right. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Not much of a meeting, Mr. Early. Not much of a meeting.

(Notebook VIII-PC -- page 152 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #825
Executive Office of the President
May 15, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

Q Here is another interesting document that was rather widely syndicated. (handing to the President The Washington Post for May 15 -- Broadway Glossary, by Leonard Lyons, as follows):

> "Equality -- At Hyde Park last weekend some of the visitors discussed the proposed 25 thousand dollar ceiling on incomes. 'It'll be a true equalizer if incomes are limited to that figure,' said one of the visitors.... 'Think so?' asked the President.. 'Well,' was the reply, 'it will mean that for the first time the President of the United States will make as much as the president of General Motors.'"

THE PRESIDENT: Probably true. (laughter)

Q We were scooped.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We were scooped then.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would add to it that I will be worse out of pocket then the president of the General Motors Corporation. It will be a larger deficit.

Q What we were mostly interested in was the wide publicity given the Hyde Park trip.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't that curious? Strange things happen in common.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got to read something first. (pause) Oh, let's see -- number one, I have got another chart like last month's, on Lend-Lease aid. And Bill (Hassett) will give you the chart. It shows another rise for the month of April, of exports from here under Lend-Lease, to well over 600 million dollars for the month of April.

Q That is the total for the month, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Bringing the total aid from March, 1941, through April, 1942, to 3 billion 835 million dollars. You can have that. (handing the chart to Mr. Hassett)

MR. HASSETT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, can it be said whether or not shipments to Russia are now up to the Moscow protocol?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along all right. That's all I can say.

Q Mr. President, would there be any figures outside of the Lease-Lend that would add to the picture of what is being sent abroad?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes and No. Of course, things that go to our own people on the other side are going over all the time.

Q He means purchases of the British, I think.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I imagine so, because I don't believe that all of the material which they ordered themselves direct -- before March, 1941 -- has yet been delivered. I don't know how much that amount is.

Q Could you tell how many months it took at the beginning to equal that 600 million dollars -- how that compares with the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You mean when the previous purchases equaled the Lend-Lease deliveries?

Q No, back to Lend-Lease. At what time -- by what time had you sent 600 million dollars under Lend-Lease -- the first 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you. Wait a minute -- give me the -- give me the chart. (turning to Mr. Hassett who handed it to him) These are those column things. (indicating) They don't quite equal the actual

-- actual figures, so I would have to guess it. You can see from this -- if you take a ruler you can tell pretty well. It's the only way you can do it.

For instance, in March, 1941, there's a little tiny bit, and then each month -- April, May, June, July, August, September, etcetera -- each month it goes on up. Well, if you add all those little things together until you have added enough together to make that column of 600 million dollars, you will get an approximate estimate.

Q It looks as if it went quite a way.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now, let's see. I would say -- you will have to measure this -- this is not any statement by me -- I am doing it by eye -- one, two, three -- I would say at a guess: last October. By last October we had sent a total of 600 million over -- March to October.

Q Including October?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Including October?

THE PRESIDENT, Yes, I should think so. But as I say, you would have to take a ruler and measure it, and do it yourself.

Q Mr. President, how much of this material has actually been delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How much of this material has actually been delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can't -- you will have to take a ruler. You will have to see what we shipped out of here. I can't tell you the proportion that actually got there. Pretty good proportion.

Q Does that also include the Services over here?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That also includes the Services over here, does it not, this 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: No. This is stuff shipped.

Q Stuff shipped.

Q Mr. President, does it not include ship repair in American ports?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to look and read it more carefully. I don't know. (pause) I should say, Yes, because of this sentence: (reading): "The major part of the aid supplied is in the form of finished munitions." Now that means that the minor parts would be in things like ship repair.

Q Does it include food, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Oh, Yes.

Q Mr. President, does the 3 billion 835 million dollars represent exports or total expenditures?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- as I was just saying, I gather from that sentence ---

Q (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that the major part represents finished munitions which means export.

Q Is the breakdown on that confidential and secret ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- as to what nations got it?

THE PRESIDENT: Then I have got -- I have signed the (phonetically) Wack bill -- W.A.A.C. -- taking ladies into the Army. (laughter) I have also signed an Executive Order establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, and providing for its organization into units. The objective of this Order is: the number of units shall not exceed a hundred, and the total enrollment shall not exceed 25 thousand. That, of course, is for this time.

Q Could you tell us, sir, who is to head it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you selected the Director?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you selected the Director?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

RCB 2-26-87

Q Mr. President, since the Board of Economic Warfare informally took over some shiploading, it is reported that ships are going out of New York Harbor for South Africa only partly loaded. I wondered if you had any decision as to whether the Board of Economic Warfare or the War Shipping [Administration?] Board is to handle loading?

THE PRESIDENT: The Shipping Board. There has never been any question about that.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, in a current magazine there is a piece appearing this week called "Congress For Victory." A statement is made in that piece that this coming Congressional election may well be the most important, from the American point of view, since the Civil War. Do you coincide with that view?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, in the first place, what magazine was it?

Q It's the New Republic.

THE PRESIDENT: The New Republic -- which I haven't read for a great long time. I haven't read the article, and categorical statements like that are perfectly silly.

Q Mr. President, going back to Lend-Lease, you said you couldn't give us the destination, but could you say whether even a small part of it went to South America?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't even tell you that. If I were to say that, then somebody would say, "How much of it went to China?" and so forth and so on. You would get the whole story.

Q Mr. President, after the Pacific War meeting the other day several of the people who participated came out talking about a lecture that they had heard on loose talk.

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I guess so. It is quite customary on my part. (laughter)

Q (continuing) We ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And very much needed. Because, My God, the loose talk -- I think there is more of it in Washington than all the rest of the country put together, quite frankly. The country is all right. The country is keeping a pretty close mouth, but I don't think Washington is.

Q Didn't you mention to them loose talk from the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Didn't you mention to them loose talk from the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, various places of loose talk, not just the Far East.

Q Prime Minister (John) Curtin says you are not aiming at him. Could there have been anybody else in Australia ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wasn't aiming at Australia. I am aiming -- there are lots of other places -- India, Egypt, South America. In fact every continent.

Q A place called Capitol Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A place called Capitol Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: That is included in the District. (laughter)

Q Is there any loose talk in Shangri-La?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are perfectly marvelous. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say as to what you visualize in taking over these commercial airlines, upon what appeared today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, simply this, Jim, that we need all the planes that we can get of every kind. Actually we have even taken over a lot of "puddle-jumpers," little bits of one-man planes and two-man planes for various purposes. Anything that will fly almost is useful to the Government in this war. And the same way, there is -- as we extend the fighting, actually getting into the fighting in various parts of the world, we have to have more transport planes. We are taking over a great many transport planes -- commercial planes that belong to private owners for war necessities. And I think people in this country are going to be -- going to understand it very well.

Well, just for an example, I always, you know, use the personal equation a good deal. A couple of weeks ago I had come down from New York -- just one spot -- from New York -- to see me in the course of a week about 12 people, who came down to see me on non-Government and non-war business. Nothing to do with the Government. Nothing to do with the war. And out of those 12 people seven came by plane. Well, that was all right. The line was running. Now those 7 people needn't have come by plane. It was just the easiest thing to do, and the plane was running. All right. No kick about their having come by plane.

But suppose we were to cut the service between New York and Washington, or Chicago and Washington? Supposing we had cut it in half? Those people would come, and would come gladly, by train, instead of by plane. And I am inclined to think that that is an increasing necessity in the country. It isn't so very long ago that there wasn't any plane service between New York and Washington, or Chicago and Washington. Everybody got on pretty well.

And in the same way it does affect, and probably will more greatly affect, as time goes on, the Air Mail service. It is only a relatively few number -- small number of years ago that we didn't have any Air Mail. I guess the country could get along without as much Air Mail service as they are getting today.

Q Mr. President, I had in mind particularly whether you were impressed with the idea that transport planes should be built to carry as much as 10 thousand pounds with a plywood chassis, etcetera, as part of this general program of transporting large amounts of freight by air? Is that all part of the same picture?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I couldn't -- I couldn't tell you weight-carrying capacity. I don't know. But we are building a very large number of transport planes for the Army and Navy, and that isn't enough. We need more.

Q Mr. President, can we infer from what you said about the visitors taking the train that there won't be any shortage of coach transportation on the railroads?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You might have to stand up.

Q I didn't mean that. There has been some talk about the possibility of restricting even coach travel on railroads.

THE PRESIDENT: I shouldn't think we had come to that point yet, but we have to remember another thing, that there is natural curtailment in it, because there will be fewer people this summer, because of working, who will go away for summer holidays by coach, as well as by automobile. If it becomes necessary later on it will be done, but I don't see any necessity at the present time.

Q Mr. President, have you accepted the resignation of Judge James B. Allred of Texas as Federal Judge?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, wasn't that given out? I accepted it -- I don't know, what? -- a couple of days ago. (turning to Mr. Hassett) Will you check on that, Bill?

MR. HASSETT: I will look that up.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment, sir, on the announcement by Governor (Herbert) Lehman that he would not seek renomination, and would not accept renomination?

THE PRESIDENT: (almost silently) No. No.

(pause here while the President read a document in front of him)

THE PRESIDENT: That's not ripe. (laughter)

Q Mr. Roosevelt, in connection with your discussion here on planes you made the remark about our getting into fighting in various parts of the world, when you said we would need more transport planes. Is there anything you could say in elaboration of that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except we are getting into the fight more and more, and in different new places all the time.

Q Mr. President, could you say whether the report is correct that there are American troops in Madagascar?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I could say anything about it.

Q Mr. President, do you believe these gasoline rationing cards should be secret, or a matter of public record?

THE PRESIDENT: A matter of public record. Why not? All I read -- all I know is what I read in the papers. The White House is going -- I am doing the same thing by trying to curtail the gas that is used in the White House cars.

Things like -- well, just for an example, I have got a pretty careful search going on as to how we can save gasoline in the White House. And of course everybody knows that I expect to go to Hyde Park occasionally in the next six months. But every time I have gone up there I have always sent a White House car up by road, for my own use. And I have sent a Secret Service car, for their use, up there by road. Well, that is a matter of -- up and back -- of about 500 miles, and that wears out a lot of rubber, and it burns a lot of gas.

So I am leaving one White House car up there, thereby saving 500 miles, and leaving one Secret Service car up there -- a total saving of a thousand miles. Of course, that is just an illustration of how we are trying to cut down on the consumption of gas and the use of rubber as much as we possibly can.

Q Mr. President, in connection with making those gas ration cards a matter of public record, it has been suggested that holders of cards be made to carry a sticker on their windshield indicating what kind of ration card they have obtained, should they show up at the ball park or race track ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am awful fond of a lot of details in all kinds of departments, but that is a new one on me, and I don't think that I should even be asked to answer the question.

Q I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know is the answer.

Q Isn't that an invitation to rock-throwing?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Isn't that an invitation to rock-throwing?

(laughter)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC -- page 157 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #826
Executive Office of the President
May 19, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

(as Mr. Early sat down on the edge of the side table, the sword of a Japanese general, recently presented to the President by Francis B. Sayre, U. S. High Commissioner of the Philippines, on his return from there, fell to the floor)

MR. EARLY: Just the Mikado, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Hari-kari.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the blood still on it?

MR. EARLY: (picking up the sword) May (Craig) says it's a good omen, sir. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Is the blood still on it?

(Mr. Early endeavored to pull the sword out of the scabbard, without success)

Q (aside) No wonder he (the Japanese general) got killed. (laughter)

(Mr. Early finally unsheathed the sword)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is (any blood).

MR. EARLY: I think it has been cleaned.

THE PRESIDENT: A little brown spot.

MR. EARLY: Shall I sheath it?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Don't monkey with it. You're not old enough. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (speaking softly) I don't think I have anything. I have been very much saddened by two deaths in the last 36 hours. One was --

Oh -- Patty Boland (Democratic Whip in the House), who was a very old friend of mine. I am asking Frank Walker (Postmaster General) to represent me at the funeral tomorrow. And the other one was another even older friend, in the Tariff Commission -- Ray Stevens ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Stevens.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- who has been with me in Washington not only all this time but about seven or eight years before in the old days.

I don't think I have got any news whatsoever.

Q Mr. President, Joe Louis (the prizefighter) has suggested we call this "God's War." How do you like the suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I can say I hope it is.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, the landing of those American troops in Ireland attracted a great deal of enthusiastic and favorable attention, as you may know. I wondered whether you would add to it, or say anything more about it?

THE PRESIDENT: More? You mean more troops?

MR. GODWIN: No.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh.

MR. GODWIN: I mean anything about that particular landing?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It was successfully carried out, and I hope that that success will continue in the future.

Q Does that mean, sir, we are going to send more?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Sort -- sort of an implication in there, isn't there? (laughter)

Q That's what I thought, but I would rather you would say, sir.

Q Mr. President, do you expect any specific development out of the renewed consideration of the oil supply on the Eastern Seaboard -- consideration of pipelines, etcetera?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. The -- of course, we are looking at it from every angle. The one angle, of course, is to resurrect the old proposal of a pipeline which we had -- Oh, what was it? -- a long time ago -- six or eight months -- which would have been successful at that time before we got into the war, if it hadn't been blocked in the State of Georgia. It was so late, that blocking of it -- we needed the steel -- we didn't go ahead with it. Otherwise it would have been -- it would have been built today.

And then the other proposal was a pipeline across the north part of Florida, by which we would bring oil in barges through the inter-coastal canal to the west side of Florida and pump it out into barges -- pump it across to other barges on the east coast of Florida, and then bring it up through the inter-coastal canal, which we can do, as far as -- as far as Philadelphia, without going outside.

And we are looking at all angles of it. We want to get more oil to the Eastern seaboard. Of course there is plenty of oil in the country. It is entirely a question of transportation of it.

Q Do you believe, sir, that any -- that the use of any considerable amount of steel is barred?

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Do you believe, sir, that the use of any considerable amount of steel is barred for the further construction of pipelines into the East over land pipelines, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It will take a lot of steel if we build it all the way through, at the present time, to the Eastern seaboard.

Q Do you believe, sir, that the situation would be helped by providing a smaller amount of steel that would be useful in making inter-connections and things of that sort to the present system?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite get it.

Q I mean, sir, that there are now short disconnected pieces of pipeline in several ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know, frankly, what they are doing on digging up that steel. They were at it, but I don't think there is nearly enough that could be dug up to build a pipeline. That's the last I heard -- that was a couple of weeks ago.

Q In that connection, Mr. President, there have been reports that small wooden tankers that used to ply along the Eastern seaboard are now being diverted, or are being needed to supply various other purposes elsewhere in the world, and therefore that almost all the tankers are off, from the standpoint of coming up and down along the coast. Is that so?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes and No. 50-50. That's all I can tell you on that without disclosing ship movements.

Q Mr. President, does the building of any of these pipelines or a barge system depend on legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Do you think, Mr. President, that it will be necessary to extend rationing to other parts of the country -- gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's a thing that is being talked about. Of course the -- what I have felt about it is that parts of the country that can use oil or gas out of a pipeline directly, without transporting it either in tank cars or -- or trucks, in view of the fact that there is plenty -- plenty of it where it can be used, directly out of a pipeline, I think that's all right. I don't know why we should restrict use, except in connection with the general over-use of tires.

On the other hand, there are certain portions of the country that get their supply from a pipeline, and then haul it a -- relatively a short distance, but still do use tank cars and trucks for that haulage. And I am inclined to think that there should be some -- what will I call it? -- a process of equalization there, so that some of those tank cars or trucks could be diverted -- not all of them, but some of them -- to portions of the country that are wholly dependent on trucks and tank cars.

Q Mr. President, according to the A.E.F. landings in Ireland there has been a great deal of feeling in Australia, particularly in the last 24 hours, that perhaps the Southwest Pacific is being ignored?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard anything about it. New one on me.

Q Mr. President, getting back to this pipeline and the barges, is that for gasoline or for oil?

THE PRESIDENT: Both.

Q Both.

Q Sir, pursuing that a little farther, Mr. President, could you speak of it with specific regard to the Middle West?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There are some places, for instance, in the Middle West, that have, although it is a pipeline area -- there are a good many places that have to get their gas and oil through tank cars or trucks.

In other words, my general thought is that the problem of shortage should be treated as a national problem, with what might be called a pooling of all tank cars and trucks where the locality depends on them to get the oil and gas. That is perfectly simple.

Now, for example, you wouldn't -- I wouldn't restrict the supply of gas and oil in -- what? -- Los Angeles, because they have got the wells and the refineries right there. The same thing is true in those portions of Texas, or other States, that are right in the oilwell territory. Nor would I restrict it where they get the stuff right out of the land pipeline.

I don't think it is something to be terribly excited about. I think it is a question of the rule of reason.

Q Mr. President, do you expect any steel to be allocated for the building of barges to haul gasoline?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know yet.

Q Coordinator Ickes said at his last Press Conference that that was one of the difficulties, that there were no steel barges.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is a very great difficulty, of course. You can build inter-coastal canal barges out of wood for oil. You can't put gas into a wooden barge. It eats through. And you can't build concrete barges without the use of much steel. I don't think we have got enough steel to build a whole fleet of steel barges.

MR. GODWIN: Is it a question of barrels ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- barrels in these barges from which the oil seeps through?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. But if you put gasoline into a wooden receptacle of any kind, you find that you don't have as much when you open it up.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, That's right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC - page 174 - JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #827
Executive Office of the President
May 22, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a couple of things, both of which are aimed at the simplification of ordinary Government procedure under war conditions. The first relates to the adjustment of railway labor disputes. I signed an Executive Order this morning. Hitherto, before the -- I guess Steve (Early) has this for you ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) I will have it, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Before the President has appointed an emergency fact-finding Board as a result of a labor railway dispute, it has been necessary for the employees involved to take a formal -- take a formal vote, declaring a strike and fixing a date for the vote. In view of the fact that American labor generally is agreed that during the war there shall be no strikes, it has become advisable and necessary to adopt a procedure which would obviate this necessity for a strike vote. The Executive Order provides that if a dispute is not settled by mediation or arbitration under the provisions of the Railway Labor Act -- which still remains the first step -- instead of taking a strike vote the employees may request the creation of an emergency fact-finding board.

For this purpose the Order provides for the creation of a National Railway Labor Panel, consisting of a Chairman and eight members to be appointed by the President. The Chairman of this Panel shall have the power to designate 3 members of the Panel to sit as such an emergency fact-finding board, whenever in his judgment the dispute, if unadjusted, may interfere with the prosecution of the war, thus obviating the necessity under the old law for a strike vote.

In this way the usual normal processes of adjustment of railway labor disputes may be continued without requiring the employees either to go out on strike or take a strike vote.

It does not amend the Railway Labor Act, which has worked very well for a good many years, but merely sets up for the duration of the war this extra-statutory Panel which will provide a means of adjusting disputes without actual strikes.

I think that is perfectly clear.

Q Mr. President, who makes the request? You said the employees make the request? Do they take a vote, or request ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- their Executive Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q May I ask ---

Q (interposing) Are you ready to nominate the members of the Panel?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Then another one, which is in the form of a couple of agreements -- no Order. In case we get bombed -- any community on either coast -- there have been three agencies of the Government that have been concerned with looking after the civil population: the Federal Security Agency, the O.C.D., Civilian Defense, and the American Red Cross. And they have agreed -- all three of them -- on plans to assist civilian victims of enemy action in case of bombing or shelling.

Immediate responsibility for the care of people who are injured as a result of enemy action is placed on the Emergency Medical Service of the United States Citizens' Defense Corps. In other words, that is the local organization. The Red Cross, which of course has always had its local organization in those places, will assist in furnishing nurses' aides, stretcher teams, ambulances, supplementary equipment, and will not duplicate the work of the Emergency Medical Service.

The Federal Security Administrator will look to the organization, facilities, and resources -- No -- the Red Cross, F.S. -- Federal Security, and Red Cross, will look to the resources of the Red Cross to provide the food, clothing, temporary shelter for masses of individuals in the emergency period, during and immediately following any enemy attack.

The Red Cross will continue special functions only until the regular Federal, State and local public agencies which have the normal responsibility for meeting the needs of dependent people can make their services available after the emergency. The Red Cross will provide additional services to the appropriate public authorities, on their request, to supplement the normal community facilities.

Emergency feeding and housing, though similarly recognized as the responsibility of the Red Cross, is a function of the over-all emergency services of the local (Citizens') Defense Corps. The service thus operates under the control of the Commander of the Defense Corps, in accordance with the detailed plans that are being worked out by the Defense Corps, the Red Cross Chapter, and the local public welfare agencies.

Well, we will give you one of those. Of course the thing is based on a good deal of experience that we have had, as for instance the Ohio floods of a few years ago, where we got excellent teamwork between the

Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Red Cross, local authorities, etcetera. And the thing clicked pretty well. This merely makes a similar arrangement in case of enemy attack.

MR. GODWIN: Isn't the Army taking charge of the whole business or not, under that sort of business?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: In other words, it -- it is an enemy action, and it has these civilian results?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. But -- put it this way: in the emergency, during the attack, and a whole lot of people are perhaps wounded -- killed ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that is not up to the Army, because they are doing military defense work. It is up to one of these three agencies. Then afterwards we bring in the normal local people to help.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Of course, actually, the over-all in command is the defense area Commander.

Q Mr. President, is this Citizens' Defense Corps a part of the O.C.D. setup?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That's right.

Q Mr. President, is this a Directive or an agreement on what -- just what is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't either a Directive or an agreement. It is just a way of working the thing out. I wouldn't dignify it.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I go back ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Just a working arrangement.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- to the railroad matter?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You have all the copies of the agreement.

MR. GODWIN: The railroad matter interested me because the railroad law is very clear.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) I think it is about as clear a law as they have. Then you make an Order -- an Executive Order of it. Does that come under the law, or is it extra ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Extra.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- wartime powers?

THE PRESIDENT: Extra wartime powers. Insertion in the regular normal peacetime procedure of one more step.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Does that leave a possible strike step beyond it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. Of course legally I suppose it would be possible, but actually and practically, because they have already said they won't go out on strike during the war, it means that this Panel will settle it.

Q Mr. President, this change was requested, was it not, by the Railway unions?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Oh, Yes.

Q (continuing) This procedural step was requested by the Railway Unions, and agreed to by the A.A.R. (Association of American Railroads)?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, is anything going to be done for the victims of the verbal bombings in New York? (referring to the verbal clash between Mayor LaGuardia and James Landis, O.C.D. head, over civilian defense matters) (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's rather an important question. Let's think it over.

Q Mr. President, in your cost of living Message to Congress you mentioned steps to encourage payment of debts as part of your policy. In that connection, would you have any comment on proposals that credits on income taxes be allowed for a reasonable amount of the debt retirement payments?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I am not familiar enough with it.

Q Mr. President, on Wednesday the President of Peru (Manuel Prado) came to say goodbye to you, after his visit in the United States. Could you tell us anything about your talk at that time, or about his visit generally here?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that he was just as happy to be here as we were to have him here. He saw a good deal of the defense work, and he was an extremely delightful guest. And it is part, of course, of the hope that we all feel, not only with Peru but with the other Republics, that we will have more and more knowledge of each other at first-hand.

And as you probably know, in 1939, in the spring -- it was a secret then but it came out afterwards -- I had planned to go down the west coast of South America that autumn. But there were certain untoward events that occurred that autumn, so I couldn't leave. I still hope I can do it some day.

Q Mr. President, now that you have had a talk with Governor (Herbert) Lehman, is there anything you could tell us about what part he is going to play in this picture?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q Governor Lehman?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q You had a talk with Governor Lehman the other day. Possibly you could tell us something about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. I don't believe there is any news.

MR. GODWIN: Is there any further news on the time-and-a-half for overtime for Government employees?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are still working on the actual figures. It is -- it is true that -- I think it is a -- a matter of justice, because they have had very ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- little in the way of increased incomes in the last few years to put them on a basis with the rest of the working people in this country, up to a -- a certain limit. In other words, it really would fall under that phrase of -- the word "adjustment" -- primarily to take care of the people in the lowest brackets.

Q Mr. President, in your Message on controling the cost of living, one of the steps you set forth was stabilization of wages, which you said would be handled by the War Labor Board.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I said stabilization of wages.

Q Remuneration of ---

Q (interposing) Excuse me. (laughter) You said that this would be handled by the National War Labor Board. There has been talk about the problem of wage increases, or wage disputes, which are settled without reference to that Board, and in more than 95% of cases are settled that way. And they have before them now the problem of some Southern California aircraft companies which have no dispute with their employees but are willing to raise wages. They want to know whether that conflicts with this program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think it probably would. In other words, we can't have one company that -- just because it happens to be able financially to pay -- go ahead and raise wages in one plant, making everybody else unhappy in all the other plants, which is a matter which is being taken into consideration -- probably will be -- by the -- by the method of not recognizing private increases which are contrary to the national -- national policy. We want to get as great a uniformity as we can.

Q Mr. President, do you think that there are some signs of more optimism about the war being expressed now than appears to be justified or wise? Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. In a war public opinion -- and news -- goes up and down with things which look big at the moment that actually are merely a part of a war. And all we can do to prevent those ups and downs the better it will be for the war effort. It is going to be a long war, and there is no reason for being over-optimistic one week and over-pessimistic the next week. It is caused largely by an unfortunate tendency of -- I would say almost -- especially the American people -- the tendency to over-statement. And it is a great mistake to over-state things. And I think that the Press can help very much on that.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, do you think that some bad news should be passed by the Censor's office ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, if it doesn't ---

Q (continuing) --- on ship sinkings?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, sure. Bad news should be passed out obviously just as much as good news, just as soon as it doesn't affect military operations. There is only one reason for withholding bad news and that is that it might affect military operations and cause more bad news.

Q Mr. President, do you think that this joint Army-Navy communique might contribute to some of this super-optimism?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. To be perfectly honest and truthful, I didn't read it.

Q You didn't miss much. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you explain what you mean by not recognizing pay increases granted by private companies?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose it is better -- it is better to say too on that that -- to do everything we could to prevent unwarranted increases by individual companies, in order to keep them in line with the general policy. Now what steps should be taken, I don't know. There are half a dozen different steps.

Q Is the -- is there a possibility, sir, that there may be a growing use of the -- of the type of agreement which has been used so successfully in shipbuilding ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I don't know.

Q (continuing) --- industry stabilization?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is too categoric. There are so many ways of doing it, you know.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, may I ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, isn't this ship-sinking situation still pretty serious?

THE PRESIDENT: This what?

Q This ship-sinking situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I revert ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is no news in that. We all know it.

MR. GODWIN: That -- that joint communication or communique yesterday, if you will pardon me for being personal, I based all the optimism I had on that statement, which I thought was a splendid statement -- factual, and well presented. It hadn't -- didn't have very much bad news in it, and it was official ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- highly official.

THE PRESIDENT: As I say, I didn't read it.

MR. GODWIN: You didn't read it?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you.

MR. GODWIN: As a member of the promulgating forces of the Press and radio, I would hate to give -- I would hate to give full support either one way or the other ---

THE PRESIDENT:, (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- and there is no better place to lay back on than the War and Navy Departments.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but really I don't think -- well, in other words, I think we should rely on them as a general rule ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- but again not over-emphasize what one reads into the report personally.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There are no two of us in this room who would read a report and get exactly the same slant from it. The individual mind does work in there.

Q Yet yesterday, Mr. President, one of the heads of the war-making departments warned people against being too optimistic ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- following this statement.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Did you read Mr. Early's speech at Toledo? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Did you read Mr. Early's speech at Toledo?

THE PRESIDENT: I learned from the headlines that Mr. Early said we are going to win this war, and it's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Can we rely on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Rely on him. When he tells you that, he is telling the truth. It might take an awful long time, but he's right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC - page 138 -- JR)
(Notebook IX-PC - page 1-6 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #828
Executive Office of the President
May 26, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M.,E.W.T.

Q Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir?

Q The news editor of the Tampa, (Fla.) Tribune received a letter and asked me to transmit the sense of it. (handing a small typewritten sheet to the President, who laughed heartily after reading it)

Q (aside) Something from Shangri, La. (the State of Louisiana)

THE PRESIDENT: That's rather nice.

Q (aside) He received a question from a reader.

THE PRESIDENT: Has that been circulated?

Q No, it hasn't.

THE PRESIDENT: Got to tell them about it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The -- there is only one thing I have, in regard to our old lesson in geography, which we get twice a week. This comes from Louisiana. A Southern newspaper editor was asked in a letter to the editor where Shangri La was, and he said that he had examined carefully the maps of every parish in the State of Louisiana and been unable to find Shangri, (spelling) L-A.

(loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Very nice.

Steve (Early) says I have nothing -- looked all over.

Q When is the ambassador of Shangri La going to present his credentials? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's right too.

Q Mr. President, have you any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Will look into that.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, I understood that was an American possession. (more laughter)

Q Have you any Shangri La stamps for cancellation? (again more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have a special album sent me by the "Lama." (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, in regard to proposals to register all youths 18 and 19 are there any plans at present to effect changes in the Draft law?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I expect to talk to (Major) General (Lewis B.) Hershey about it in the course of the next day or so. I haven't done anything about it.

MR. GODWIN: May I continue that subject, sir? Is there any -- has it been recommended to you at all so far, the 18 and 19 year old classes?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: No.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got a letter -- I don't see why I shouldn't tell you about it. (turning to Mr. Early) Is it all right, Steve, to tell them about the lovely idea of Russ Young's?

MR. EARLY: Yes, it's a local. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it's a good local story.

Russ sent me a letter to ask what my thought was about having fireworks on the Fourth of July. And everybody wants to celebrate the Fourth in some way, but they are a little worried because the population of this city has got so big that there might be danger to life and limb, and these new temporary buildings down here, if they had them at the

Washington Monument. So I talked to Steve -- and I haven't talked to Russ yet -- he will read it in the (Evening) Star when he gets ready -- (laughter) -- he suggested that this year, if there are any fireworks left over and they don't interfere with priorities -- they tell me there are quite a lot left over -- to have the fireworks the way they shoot off those abroad -- set off from a barge set out in the middle of the river, so that you can see them from both sides, and then anchor the Marine band or the Navy band -- (laughter) -- on some neighboring barge to dispense patriotic music to the crowds on both banks, in between the rockets. I don't think it's a bad idea at all.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: The rest is up to Russ.

MR. EARLY: It will be easy to clean the grounds too. (laughter) It will flow out with the tide.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's what I told him.

Q Mr. President, if you can go back to this Draft business a minute, General Hershey last night, in his talk at Harvard, made some reference to the possibility of setting up categories, or for a more uniform system of classification. Have you discussed that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any ideas on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't talked to anybody about it.

Q Mr. President, have you reached any decision on the barge -- pipelines?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I ought to get a report from that committee, I should think, within certainly a day or two.

Q Which pipeline, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Which one?

THE PRESIDENT: The one across North Florida.

Q North Florida.

Q Mr. President, you don't need any additional legislation to designate that line or to get the right-of-way, do you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there -- I think an appropriation for it is contained in one of the bills which is now either in committee or out on the Floor, but if I had reasonable assurance that it would go through, I can save time by giving them a little money out of the Emergency Fund and get the engineering started.

Q Does that run at about 3 million dollars -- three million plus?

THE PRESIDENT: Over it. I think it runs to about 9, my recollection of it.

Q Mr. President, it has been stated from some sources that wooden barges, which might be cleared right from Florida from the terminus of that pipeline, do not hold gasoline satisfactorily, but would hold oil.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true. Gasoline in a wooden barge seeps through, but would carry oil, thereby releasing certain other oil vehicles for the use of gasoline. Of course they can carry gasoline in drums.

Q Mr. President, speaking of gasoline, you said at your Tuesday (Press) Conference that such cities as Los Angeles, and States such as Texas might be exempt. Now, down at the O.D.T. (Office of Defense Transportation) and the O.P.A. (Office of Price Administration) and so forth, they are talking about uniform rationing -- rationing to save rubber.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Have you changed your ideas on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know what the method would be.

Q You said if they were near a pipeline or oil well ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and they are talking in terms of rationing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. Well, we do have to save rubber, and frankly I don't know what the method will be. I think (Leon) Henderson is coming in to talk to me about it.

Q Who is coming in?

THE PRESIDENT: Henderson.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, are any plans being made for synthetic rubber production beyond the actual military needs? That is, take care of probable civilian needs after present tires wear out?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we have got -- for instance, busses. How do people get to business in Washington? We have got to have busses, because we do hope we will get certain tire substitutes before it becomes necessary -- before the present tires all wear out. I -- I don't -- I don't attach very much over-excitement to this thing. I think we are going to work it out all right.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We are working on -- I don't know, what? -- two or three different kinds of tires that don't contain any rubber. Well, if you go 25, or certainly keep under 35 -- 30 miles an hour on a good road on a tire, I guess you will get to town all right.

Q Mr. President, how about the wooden barges for coal? Is that linked in the report you are expecting?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The whole barge program?

THE PRESIDENT: They carry most anything.

Q Mr. President, the Soviet Ambassador (Maxim Litvinoff) was handed by the Secretary of State today a document concerning Lend-Lease. Could you shed any further light on that document for us?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it's just -- does the same thing we are doing with them as everybody else.

Q Is that specifically in line with what we are doing in the case of the master agreement with Great Britain, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: General -- the same general idea.

Q This -- as I understand it, to this point it is strictly a rough -- rough proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Didn't yet get to the point where theirs ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- could be used?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

MR. P. BRANDT: They are still using their credit rather than Lend-Lease, I think, aren't they?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I think they are using Lend-Lease, but, Pete, I wouldn't swear to it. I think so.

MR. P. BRANDT: You think they are using it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but you had better check with the Lend-Lease Office first.

Q Mr. President, to get back a moment to this pipeline across Florida, I think that appropriation is in a bill which calls for 145 million dollars for improvement of waterways from the Mexican border to Trenton, New Jersey. Do you have any opinions on the whole project?

THE PRESIDENT: I think those -- as it is about that amount -- what I imagine is that it is the list of waterways that were considered essential to defense. Remember, they had a list of 400 and something million, and I think the War Department engineers have listed those that were really necessary for defense. And it would be around that figure.

Q Mr. President, on this matter of the Lend-Lease agreement with Russia, that would cover business relations with Russia for a number of years after the war, wouldn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Cover Lend-Lease operations.

Q That is what I mean. I mean it would provide a sort of general -- a general system of -- of business relationships ---

THE PRESIDENT: Not any more than any other Lend-Lease agreement does.

Q I thought perhaps ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is just exactly on the same basis as all the others.

Q I thought perhaps it was the whole system in Russia -- government business?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think it just does with Russia what we have done with all the other nations.

Q Mr. President, (Lieut.) General (Henry H.) Arnold is reported to be over in England at the head of a mission. Do you have any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think it speaks for itself. Another link toward the winning of the war.

Q A lot of news speculates about a second front, Mr. President. Do those two things fit together?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. Maybe Yes, maybe No. (laughter)

Q It might depend upon what General Arnold concluded after talks with the British?

THE PRESIDENT: That I -- I -- now you are pressing me a little too close.

Q Mr. President, is there any reasonable deduction to be drawn from the fact that they were all air men there?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so, any more than the next time they may all be Navy men. They are all in the same -- in the same general pool at the present time.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #829
Executive Office of the President
May 29, 1942 -- 10.55 A.M.,E.W.T.

(Lowell Mellett conversed with the President for a few moments)

THE PRESIDENT: Lowell says that his sales are increasing every day.

Q That's that good location you gave him.

THE PRESIDENT: Good location, Yes, yes. He has got to the point now where he will probably take a full page pretty soon. It's good advertising for the papers. Even the Congressmen are patronizing.

I don't think I have got a thing today. (turning to Mr. Early) Steve, you have got nothing to tell them?

MR. EARLY: Sorry, sir, but we have had nothing for a week.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Nothing since your last Press Conference.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got absolutely nothing that I can tell you. I have to amend it nowadays -- it wouldn't be strictly true that I have got nothing, because I have lots of things, but I can't tell you.

Q Lot of good things, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Some good, some bad. Run of the mine.

Q Mr. President, a proposal has been made for a conference between Members of Congress and Members of Parliament, to discuss present and future cooperation. Do you think such a conference might be wise or beneficial?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think that the Legislative branch of the Government was quite able to determine that.

Q That is putting a terrible responsibility on them, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Constitutional responsibility.

Q Mr. President, have you consulted with (Major) General (Lewis B.) Hershey about lowering the military age limits?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't. He was in the other day on something else, and I asked him to come in, as soon as he was able to get around to it, to talk about it. We haven't talked about it yet.

MR. P. BRANDT: Have you been able to talk to Mr. (Leon) Henderson and the other people on the gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, Pete. Not at all.

Q Have you any ideas on these "unreasonable" payments in the war industries that Secretary Morgenthau and the Ways and Means Committee are seeing if they can find some way to go in the income tax -- these so called "unreasonable" bonuses and salaries?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, maybe it's a loophole that ought to be stopped. But just to show -- to show you how people sometimes forget: old Stevie was in this morning -- Steve Early -- and we were talking about that very thing. And he said, "Why, you know, last time when we were talking about loopholes, and had those seven or eight bad instances of loopholes," he said, "you told the Press the names of the people." (laughter)

And I offered to bet him 5 dollars, and he wouldn't take it.

MR. EARLY: I took it, sir. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He said that I gave them out, that was it.

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if he -- if he took it he owes me 5 dollars. Because, of course, what happened was this: that (Secretary of the Treasury) Morgenthau gave me instances, and said, "I am not going to tell you the names," which he didn't. And then he went up before the Committee and gave the examples of what had been done. He said to the Committee, "I am not going to tell you the names." The Committee insisted. And the story came out by all you people upon the Hill through the Committee, which insisted on the names being given out. Now that was the simple fact.

Then afterwards, at the next Press Conference down here, it being completely public property which had been brought out by the Committee on the Hill, we people did, in one of our Conferences -- we discussed the people themselves who have been guilty of it.

So Steve owes me 5 dollars. (laughter)

And the same way with this thing. I haven't got the foggiest idea who these groups were, or who the individuals were. And they were not disclosed, as I understand it, to the Committee yesterday. And that's all there is to the story. And I am not disclosing them, because I don't know. And in the second place, I am not going to ask who they were.

Q Did you have any objections to the Committee disclosing them?

THE PRESIDENT: That is again a Legislative function.

Q Do you think as a matter of principle these fellows ought to get three or four times what the President of the United States gets?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any relationship between the two. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, in connection with your stabilization of remuneration program ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- you spoke last week about the problem of voluntary pay increases which might be out of line with national policy. It has been reported since then that an inter-departmental committee has recommended to you that you set up a four-member group, to sort of determine a Federal policy on the subject of voluntary increases, and that you would probably issue a directive dealing with that problem?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. There have been -- I don't know -- people that are studying it -- there have been four or five different recommendations. I couldn't even tell you what they are. It hasn't come into my jurisdiction yet. I have no idea.

Q Mr. President, in your conference with (Major) General Hershey did you take up any matters of aiding any colleges ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which would what?

Q (continuing) --- that might be hurt by the draft?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which would what?

Q (continuing) Did you take up any question of aiding any of the colleges or educational institutions that may be hurt by the draft, or may have students taken out?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Not that. What we -- what we talked about was the problem of illiteracy in this country. In the -- in the broad sense of the word "illiteracy," not just reading and writing, but a -- a lack of education. They brought in some rather startling figures applying to citizens, and applying to aliens in this country -- both aliens and citizens -- on the question, for instance, of the turning down of a whole lot of people from -- for military service on the ground that their -- what is it? -- I.Q.s?---

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I don't know what they call it, something like that ---

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- were not sufficient to serve in the Army and Navy. And we are turning down an awful lot of people -- aliens and citizens -- on that ground. And they are studying the question as to whether -- mind you, these people otherwise, except for an I.Q. which is too low under the present standards (are all right) -- as to whether the Government shouldn't do something to make their services available in the Army and Navy, by giving them the kind of instruction which would raise their I.Q. to the passing point.

And it is a very broad subject. It is merely under study at the present time. There is no plan. But those -- these figures startled me -- the number of people in this country. They are not morons -- most of them due mostly to a lack of chance, a lack of education. And as to whether the Government should try to do something about raising the educational standards of these people that are too low, I don't know. That is the thing that is being studied at the present time.

Q Mr. President, when you speak of education, do you mean an academic education ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- the ability to read and write, or ability ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, reading and writing would seem to be fairly important, but it is only one factor.

Q What sort of training do they need to make them eligible for military service? They don't need any particular education, do they, to know how to shoot a gun, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, outside of -- outside of reading and writing they need to have their wits sharpened. It might be (done) through a manual vocational training process. There are various component parts of it to raise the mental level. You can raise a fellow's mental level in lots of different ways.

Q In some cases you can feed them better?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can't you in some cases feed them better, and raise the mental level?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (continuing) You can feed them better and raise their mental level?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Under-nourishment is one of the factors, that is quite right.

Q Mr. President, how about the barge report -- the barge-pipeline report?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The barge and pipeline report?

THE PRESIDENT: I have nothing on it at all.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook IX-PC - page 19 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #830
Executive Office of the President
June 5, 1942 -- at 10.45 A.M.,E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: "Pa" (Watson) is getting a degree. (honorary degree of doctor of laws, from George Washington University)

MR. GODWIN: Who?

THE PRESIDENT: "Pa" Watson.

MR. GODWIN: Oh.

THE PRESIDENT: He has got a degree.

Q Third?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Third?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, more than that.

MR. GODWIN: You ought to get Russ(ell) Young (District Commissioner) one.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

MR. GODWIN: He is doing such a superb job.

THE PRESIDENT: He has done a good job.

MR. GODWIN: A little bit extra. You ought to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I only have just one thing. It's a statement that the various departments concerned have concurred in. It relates to the use of poison gas in the Far East. I guess, Steve -- better have it mimeographed.

MR. EARLY: Would you read it first?

THE PRESIDENT: I will read it, Yes. It isn't very long.

(reading) "Authoritative reports are reaching this Government of the use by Japanese armed forces in various localities of China of poisonous and noxious gasses. I desire to make it unmistakably clear that if Japan persists in this inhuman form of warfare against China, or against any other of the United Nations, such action will be regarded by this Government as though it were against the United States, and retaliation in kind and in full measure will be meted out. We shall be prepared to enforce complete retribution. Upon Japan will rest the responsibility."

MR. GODWIN: Is that a statement from you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. EARLY: Statement by the President.

Q How detailed are the reports of Japan's use of gas in China? Have there been several instances?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Over how long a period has that been?

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- several instances, because if I told you how long then you would say, "Where was it?".

Q Have there been any reports of the same nature on the other side, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you had any reports of poison gas used in Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say we have had reports, but not yet authoritative reports.

Q Mr. President, if authoritative, we would take the same position?

THE PRESIDENT: "If"? Is that the way you start the question?

Q Yes. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He has been here long enough to know better than to do that.

MR. GODWIN: Suppose we said this: the policy with respect to the Axis will be uniform?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, you ought to be in the State Department. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: You make no reply to that do you?

(the President just laughed again)

Q The British government has taken that stand with respect to Germany, hasn't it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Yes.

Q Yes.

Q Yes.

Q Well, Mr. President, will we retaliate with poison gas wherever used?

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to be ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Why don't you say so? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't I say so? They were very careful to write that statement out for me. That's all they want me to say. I mustn't say any more.

Q Who is "they," Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The State Department.

MR. GODWIN: But you would divert the attention of the American people from the gas that is close at home -- "X" cards, and so forth. We understand from the news that you may discuss gasoline rationing, rubber, and so forth, with the Cabinet, or that you may have something to say on it sometime?

Q I have got a whole bunch of people coming in at twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: When?

THE PRESIDENT: Twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: Today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, have you had any reports on mistreatment of American prisoners by the Japanese?

THE PRESIDENT: Again, nothing authoritative.

Q (continuing) The reason I ask, some chap writing in The Saturday Evening Post said he told you his story about the torturing of British prisoners, and you told him to tell it with the bark off.

THE PRESIDENT: I did. A Dutchman, I think. (Jan Henrik Marsman)

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, are any joint production committees to be set up here and in London as a result of Mr. (Oliver) Lyttelton's visit?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't seen Mr. Lyttelton yet.

Q Mr. President, are you ordering nation-wide gasoline rationing by July 15?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to begin talking about gas today at twelve o'clock.

Q Any Members of Congress, Mr. President, coming up at Noon?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait -- I am trying to look on the (engagement) list. No -- not at the twelve o'clock conference. Of course, I expect to talk with Members of Congress about the whole situation.

Q Is there anything you could say, Mr. President, to clarify this gas situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. I may not even be clarified myself at twelve o'clock. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is Senator (Tom) Connally (of Texas) one of the Congressmen who is going to talk to you about this gasoline?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. "Mac" (M. H. McIntyre) has got a whole lot of people I am requested to see, and I don't know who is on the list.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you expressed any view, or will you, on the matter of the C.C.C. camps which are left out of the current appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't taken it up. I have only read what I saw in the paper.

MR. GODWIN: Haven't said anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Mr. President, have you signed as yet the declarations of war against the three Balkan countries? (Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania)

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, do you think that nation-wide collection of scrap rubber is necessary, or would be desirable?

THE PRESIDENT: That is another thing that I am going to take up at twelve o'clock. I think -- I will tell you frankly: I think there is a lot more scrap rubber right around the country that hasn't all been collected yet.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the progress of this anti-inflation program so far?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The anti-inflation program -- seven-point program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

Q Some of the points haven't been carried out as well as some of the others.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Really, frankly, I haven't got any answer to the question. I haven't thought about it.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the action in the House which appears to have killed the pipeline and barge line across North Florida?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about that. As I understand it, that was for a pipeline and a barge line, wasn't it? I don't think that I recommended a barge line, did I? I don't think ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) No. You weren't very strong for the barge line, and the objection to the whole business in the House seems to be based on the fact that -- or at least on the assumption that there is already enough authority in your hands to -- to build a barge line, without an Act of Congress. Are you aware of such authority?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

MR. GODWIN: They quote -- Don Darrow of Michigan quoted one of these recent laws.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think the pipeline was sent up from here as a recommendation.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you make any comment on the speculation now current on the second front?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

MR. G. DURNO: Mr. President, I have been requested to ask whether -- what you think about the proposal in Chicago to name the outer drive, which you dedicated ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did what in Chicago?

MR. G. DURNO: Naming the outer drive -- which you dedicated -- MacArthur Boulevard?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it, George.

Q Mr. President, a number of aircraft companies on the West Coast report that uncertainty as to the plans of the Manpower Commission is encouraging many to -- including engineers and executives -- to accept offers from other companies at higher incomes, before their jobs are frozen. Do you believe it would be necessary to freeze engineers and executives in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You have got me cold. Never heard of it. Ask (Paul) McNutt.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, a few days ago you told us that you might have soon an Executive Order on the over-all propaganda setup. Could you tell us whether there is anything on that now?

THE PRESIDENT: What? I don't think I said over-all propaganda. (laughter) I don't think I used that horrid word.

Q Well, ---

Q (interposing) Coordinator of information.

THE PRESIDENT: Information.

Q Is there anything new on it?

THE PRESIDENT: As wide apart as the poles -- propaganda and information. I haven't got it yet.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook IX-PC -- page 27 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #831
Executive Office of the President
June 9, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a release that Steve (Early) will give you at the end -- it has been mimeographed -- being given out simultaneously in London. The American version is that: (reading not literally): "The President announced today, on behalf of himself and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the creation of a Combined Production and Resources Board, and the creation of a Combined Food Board. The general purpose of the two Boards was announced in the release of memoranda addressed by the President to Mr. Donald Nelson, who will act as the American representative on the Combined Production and Resources Board, and to Secretary Claude Wickard, who will act as the American representative on the Combined Food Board."

And then there are two things. First, the memorandum to Mr. Nelson which reads -- I won't read the whole thing, it's pretty long -- (reading not literally): "In order to complete the organization needed for the most effective use of the combined resources of the United States and the United Kingdom for the prosecution of the war, there is hereby established a Combined Production and Resources Board, to consist of himself (Donald Nelson), and the Minister of Production representing the United Kingdom."

And then the duties of it -- well, you can imagine what they are -- (reading not literally): "The Board shall combine the production programs of the United States and the United Kingdom into a single integrated program, adjusted to the strategic requirements of the war"

-- the whole of the production programs of both countries. And it takes account of military needs, and so forth and so on.

The Food Board is -- the letter -- memorandum to Wickard is along the same line. It coordinates the prosecution of the war effort by obtaining a planned and expeditious utilization of the food resources of the United Nations. And the Secretary of Agriculture represents the United States, and the head of the British Food Mission represents the United Kingdom acting under the instructions of the Minister of Food. And then the rest of it takes it up in more or less detail. I think they speak for themselves.

Q Are these just two men -- are they just two men?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but they are authorized to appoint deputies.

Q Who is the head of the British Food Mission?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't ask me embarrassing questions. (laughter) That is off the record. Don't display my ignorance.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, I would like to understand what you said there. In one place you spoke of the United Nations, and then United Kingdom. Is that correct? Two different ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) "The food resources of the United Kingdom." Is that what you said about food?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: United Nations.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: In the case of the food order ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In the case of the other one, the (Combined) Production and Resources Board, you might say practically that outside of Canada -- to a certain extent Australia -- the United Kingdom and the United States are the only producing ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- countries -- (having the) machinery.

Q Mr. President, are the reports correct that this Board standardizes equipment so that there can be an interchange of equipment?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, we have been doing that, and I suppose we will keep on doing it under the Board.

Q Will there be allocations of orders, say something we can do better ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and they can do better?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That is the function of this Board, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Right. Yes.

Q (continuing) --- as well as some of the other functions -- any more functions?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Anything besides ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. (There is a) lot of general language in there that you can put almost anything under.

Q Mr. President, is there anything that you can say about the general progress of war production?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I might have something to say about it if I had time to work it up for you. I mean it's all right. I can say that on the whole it is getting on very well, but that is not terribly exciting.

Q I was wondering, sir, if it might have reached the point where information would not be so helpful to the enemy -- so hurtful to the enemy?

THE PRESIDENT: I would think that period is coming, and that we are getting to the point where probably we can give a few more details.

Q Could we have a few figures some time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (turning to Mr. Early) Work that up, Steve, ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) All right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- get something.

Q Mr. President, this doesn't take account of the position of Canada in the production setup, does it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have -- almost ---

Q (interposing) Does that line up with the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Lines up with the United States and England Board.

Q Yes. For practical purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: For practical purposes they are in this thing.

Q Yes, it's North America, roughly?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, is there anything you could say or add to the picture possibly of the (Combined) Food Board, such as you gave -- when you spoke of the Lend-Lease you spoke of the next door -- the man next door with the (garden) hose. This might be -- this -- this piling up of food in the United Kingdom, and each outfit take what was required, or that we shift it back and forth? Is there anything you could explain about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I would say that on the question of food that that will take in production of all of the United Nations, and see where there are certain shortages. Well, those shortages, of course, will have an effect on the other side of the food problem, which is the -- the going without -- the rationing of food, or the sending of surpluses from one place to another. It will take up the problems of transportation practically all over the world. And by pooling all of our information, and getting totals for all our needs, I am inclined to think that it will give a more correct picture on -- on the assignment -- allocation of food, thereby perhaps in some cases -- many cases avoiding unnecessary hardships and rationing.

MR. GODWIN: Think we could break some of our own surpluses, for instances?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes.

I always think of a story a great many years ago, in 1918. I was staying at a country house in England, to which a number -- a number of the British cabinet had been invited. And they spent all Saturday evening indoctrinating me on all of the terrible hardships that people in England had gone through. They hadn't had this to eat or that to drink, and so forth, for a long, long time. They hadn't had any butter, and they hadn't had any bacon, and so forth. They had to really tighten their belts enormously. And I was being indoctrinated because I was the first "near" Cabinet member to go to the other side in the war.

And the next morning I was late for breakfast, and sat down, and suddenly realized that all the food was on the sideboard, like most British breakfasts. And I went over to it, and the first hot dish I took the cover off was just piled high with bacon. (laughter) So I filled my plate with bacon and sat down. And the hostess said, "What! Only -- only bacon?" I said, "Yes." I said, "You know, at home I have gone without bacon for a year and a half, in order that you good people might have it." (laughter)

There are all kinds of things of that kind where we can get, I think, a more even distribution. We may have to give up some things to other United Nations, and by -- by a general process of distribution on a fair basis with everybody that is concerned in this war. I think everybody will be happier. I think this thing is going to help.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox and Admiral (Ernest J.) King just left your office. Did they give you any kind of progress on the war in the Pacific you could pass on to us?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid not that I could pass on to you.

Q Mr. President, have you reached any decision on the calling of boys 18 and 19 for active military service?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Calling boys of 18 and 19 for active military service?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Any decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there will be a story on that for quite a long time. I think all I can say is that it is under study. And I don't know what -- wait for a few months before you ask me again.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is there anything on the rubber situation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there anything on the rubber situation, or shall we wait for a few months on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am trying to get facts on that.

MR. P. BRANDT: Are you making a fireside chat on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea, Pete.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Is that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I suppose -- I suppose there are four or five ways in which I can get certain things to the American public: through the Press, through the radio, somebody else's voice, or my own voice. I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: The rubber situation ties in with gasoline rationing, of course, does it not, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, let -- let me -- in order that there won't be any more pure guess work -- things said -- the reason I am asking for a little time to turn around is that no two accounts are identical.

And I think there is one thing that can be said for background, if you like, and that is that the -- the principal problem that is national in its scope -- every part of the country -- is the rubber problem. That is a problem that involves the whole country.

And one of the first things that I am trying to get hold of -- I think we may get something on it in a few days -- is the question about how much scrap rubber there is in the United States. And there no two people agree.

Well, it makes an awful lot of difference in the long run as to whether this country has got, in the form of old tires and old rubber lying around the lower -- not the lower, the lowest estimate of the experts, in which case the situation is very serious, or whether the country has got lying around the highest of the experts' estimates, in which case the situation confronting the country, for military purposes, is not so grave.

Now I suppose I have had as much information on what that scrap rubber is as anybody in the world -- anybody -- in Congress or out --

in a column or out. (laughter) And I don't know. I don't know who is right. (then pointing to himself) Now here is the greatest expert on it in the United States, and he doesn't know! (more laughter)

And I want to find out. And the only way I think that I can find out is to start a "Pick-Up-The-Rubber" campaign. And that is what I am working on now: a short, quick, snappy campaign to bring in all the scrap rubber that there is in the United States. And when you get through with it, we will all know. And I can't hazard a guess. Now when that thing is over, we will have one -- we will have complete and answered one of the statistical figures that nobody knows what is right and what is wrong.

Q How long will that take, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I would like to do it in two weeks.

Q Will it be compulsory?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will it be compulsory or voluntary?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it will be -- I don't know. I suppose it will be voluntary, in the sense that if you don't do it -- (and here the President paused) -- in effect it will be compulsory. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you were -- you were off -- you were background when you started. You ended up with a good story. How much of this story ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Well now, the other part of the story is this. The use of gasoline is, at the present time, only -- taken in itself, and only in itself -- a problem of the Eastern seaboard, because there isn't enough gasoline to go around. That's all. Plenty of gasoline in nearly every other part of the country. So I don't think that we should confuse the rubber problem with the gasoline problem at this time. We know we have to ration gasoline East of the Alleghenies, because there isn't enough to go around.

And then the third thing I think that we can say is that no matter what the circumstance is, no matter whether this "Pick-Up-The-Rubber" campaign brings in the highest estimated amount or not, even then we are going to have a rubber shortage which all over the country is going to be so serious that there won't be enough tires to go around.

(And here is) just a little piece of advice from the President, and that is: if you have got just four tires on your car, try to make them last just as long as you possibly can, no matter whether you live next to an oil well or not. And there are two ways of doing that, and that is to cut your mileage -- I don't mean essential mileage to get you to work -- cut out the rest of your mileage at least in half. And secondly, don't drive fast. That is just a bit of advice. Now I hope we won't have to implement that any other way. That is a hope.

Q Mr. President, can't we use that? You stated it for background ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q You stated that originally for background. Couldn't we use that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It isn't off the record. You can put that into your own words.

Q Can we attribute it to you?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can we attribute it to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think it's all right.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Sure. That's a good story.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President -- Mr. President, I was wondering, do you mean physically to bring in all of this scrap rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q Do you mean physically to bring in all of this scrap rubber at a certain time -- within a two weeks period?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why not.

Q Won't we have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Or get it weighed. The main point is to get it weighed.

Q Won't we have the same complication we had, only multiplied many times, in the aluminum drive -- inability to move it once you get it in a certain place in a town or city?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. There is a lot of land. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, if you get a lot of scrap rubber, will there be enough crude to mix with this scrap rubber to afford any hope of civilian tires next year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. You are getting technical.

Q Mr. President, is there an implication that if this voluntary campaign produces enough rubber there will not be nation-wide gas rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is an "if" question. It depends on a lot of things -- just one factor, but it is to try to get to the bottom of a very much disputed factor.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you mean that the scrap rubber will go to civilian use, or will the Army take it?

THE PRESIDENT: The Government will take it.

Q Well, it won't help the civilians any if the Army takes it.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the foggiest idea. I will take it right there -- (pointing to his heart) -- this dreadful person here, sitting here -- dictator, all those other things. I don't know where it is going.

Q Mr. President, as you said not to confuse the gas and rubber situation, isn't it pretty hard to disassociate those things, in view of the fact that some of your advisers are recommending that gas be rationed to save rubber? Isn't it rather difficult?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on how this information that I am trying to get works out.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how soon do you think this "Pick-Up-The-Rubber" campaign might get under way?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Pretty soon, I think. I think it is a pretty good idea to strike while the iron's hot, and the Lord knows it's hot now.

Q Mr. President, are we justified in assuming, based on your plea for saving rubber and tires, that there will be no compulsion in that respect until ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wouldn't -- I wouldn't assume. I haven't got quite to that point. I am still -- I am still reading "Chapter One."

Q (interposing) I was just thinking ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't know how the detective story ends.

Q (continuing) I was just thinking of the reassuring effect that would have on the people down in Texas. (laughter)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You did get a story, didn't you?

MISS MAY CRAIG: The girls named your cottage Shangri La.

THE PRESIDENT: Lovely.

MISS MAY CRAIG: You wouldn't tell us where it was.

THE PRESIDENT: I might have several. One might be called "Shangri," and the other might be called "La."

(after this Press Conference, Mr. Early told the Press that the gasoline shortage applied not only to the Atlantic Coast but also to the Pacific Northwest, and certain other geographical areas in the country)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #832
Executive Office of the President
June 12, 1942 -- at 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

(the President waved his hand in acknowledgment to the newspapermen as they filed in)

Q Good morning.

MR. GODWIN: You ought to have a laugh. (handing him The New Yorker for June 13, 1942)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: I think you deserve a smile after all your hard work. (this was a cartoon showing a young mother in bed with her new born son, and the proud father standing dutifully at the bedside. The caption says: "No, no, darling! First get his ration card, then enter him at Groton.")

THE PRESIDENT: I love it.

MR. GODWIN: Isn't that wonderful?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's grand.

MR. GODWIN: That shows the evolution ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think that's grand. That ought to be tacked up on the schoolroom (wall) for all to see.

(Mr. Godwin handed the magazine to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: Inverse ratio. That ought to be Groton.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

(a pause here)

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to move the Capital. (because of the hot weather)

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Where will we go?

THE PRESIDENT: Muggy weather.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Pike's Peak would look good.

MR. GODWIN: Wonderful.

Q A mile high.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (to Mr. Early) Steve, is it mimeographed? (referring to some typewritten sheets in front of the President)

MR. EARLY: Will be. Hasn't been.

MR. GODWIN: The King of Greece pulls ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: The King of Greece had the nerve to pull a Press Conference this morning too.

THE PRESIDENT: Good. Good. Got you up.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve will give you a mimeographed copy of what I am about to say.

(reading not literally): "President Roosevelt has ordered an intensive two weeks' drive throughout the nation to bring in from homes, offices, factories and farms all articles of rubber which have been or can be discarded. All the rubber collected will be reclaimed, and added to the nation's war supply.

"The campaign will begin at twelve point 01 (12.01) on Monday, June 15 -- that is hurrying it up ---

MR. GODWIN: (aside) It's all right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and will end at Midnight, Tuesday, June 30th. Through arrangements with the oil industry, 400 thousand gasoline filling stations throughout the country will serve as collection depots. That is practical. All rubber turned in will be weighed, and will be paid for at one cent a pound by the gasoline dealers. The President will inaugurate the campaign with a 5-minute radio talk Friday evening -- I guess that is tonight, isn't it?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't say so -- at 6.45 p.m., Eastern War Time.

"The campaign will be handled by the Bureau of Industrial Conservation and the War Production Board. It will be conducted in cooperation with the petroleum industry through the Office of the Petroleum Coordinator. The nation's oil companies have volunteered personnel and facilities, including their filling stations, to aid in making the collection. Oil company trucks will pick up the rubber. The filling stations will transport it to central collection points, after which it will be sold to the Rubber Recovery Corporation, which, however, won't make any money out of it -- nobody will make any money out of it.

"State and local salvage committees will aid in stimulating efforts to bring in all the rubber possible. People will be urged to make an active search of attics, closets, basements, and backyards for rubber articles no longer of use. Anything partly or entirely made of rubber will be acceptable. Stores, offices, factories, will also be asked to turn in discarded rubber items.

"In rural areas the Department of Agriculture County War Boards will organize intensive searches of farmlands for discarded rubber items and rubber scrap. Oil delivery trucks on rural routes will pick up and pay for rubber from farms.

"The drive to collect rubber represents one important step in efforts to deal with the rubber shortage. Despite stock piles of crude rubber accumulated before the outbreak of war, the nation still faces a serious shortage. Japanese successes in the Southwestern Pacific have cut us off from 92% of our normal rubber supply, a deficiency not made up from other sources.

"Many persons have estimated that a large potential supply exists in the accumulation of discarded rubber which can be reclaimed. Others say that rubber from this source will not be sufficient to meet the shortage. In attempting to deal with the rubber problem, the Government must count on the scrap rubber which has been collected, or which plainly can be collected. And this is to find out how much there is.

"The Army and Navy have already been forced to cut their use of rubber by 25%." Now there is -- there is something that almost ought to go into a lead -- sublead anyway. We have actually had to cut the use of rubber on -- principally on Army items, as for example, use solid tires in many vehicles where we ought to use rubber tires. It slows them down. It is much more difficult on the personnel. We are having to do it because of the shortage of rubber.

MR. GODWIN: Solids? You mean something other than rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Solids? By solid tires you mean something other than rubber? Solid ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Iron.

MR. GODWIN: Iron.

Q Mr. President, Under Secretary Patterson told a Senate Committee yesterday that he estimated the military need for rubber at least 800 thousand tons. Is that before or after this 25%?

THE PRESIDENT: Now wait a minute. I am trying to proceed in an orderly way.

Q (interjecting) I'm sorry.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I haven't yet got to the totaling of military needs, or civilian needs. The first step is to find out how much rubber we can get, and I will take up the other one. It may not be for a week or two.

(continuing reading): "If the collection campaign yields a large amount of rubber, it may be possible to protect the country's military use of rubber as well as help meet the essential civilian needs. It is hoped the campaign will recover most of the nation's hidden stocks of used, outworn or discarded rubber items."

Then the next paragraph isn't quite the way I put it. I thought you would be interested in what they handed me, as rubber that -- we always think of rubber as being only on tires. I wonder where that is? (picking up his workbasket and looking through it) Steve, see if you can -- see if it's here. I hadn't thought of these things until I -- (still looking) -- Steve's official thing hasn't got all the list of things in it. I don't know. I can't find it. (still looking) No. I can't find it. It's around here somewhere. No, I can't find it for you after all.

Well, anyway --- (laughter) -- (reading not literally): "The drive is aimed not only at collecting worn-out tires and tubes, but also such items as rubber mats, rubber-soled shoes, old hot-water bottles, jar rings, raincoats, rubber ashtrays and hundreds of other articles made in whole or in part of rubber.

"All persons are urged to make an active search for such articles, and to take them to the nearest gasoline station. Rubber items too bulky to be taken to a filling station will be picked up by oil company trucks on request of the gasoline dealer."

There is just one thing I want to add again -- because I think if it is printed every day by the papers in one form or another and talked about over the radio, it will help -- what I said the other day.

In places that are not rationed on gas, which means the great majority of the area of the country, I hope that people will use their cars for pleasure just as little as they possibly can, in order to save wearing out the tires. Slow driving is excellent, but it is even more effective to cut the mileage. That is perfectly obvious. You cut your mileage in half and save more wear on your own tires than if you merely drive very slowly. You should do both.

And I don't like to put it quite in the way that this is a warning -- it isn't a warning, it's a simple statement: I haven't got any idea yet as to when the owner of four tires can get any new tires. I don't know yet. It may be a very, very long time. So as a matter of common sense on the part of the owner of the four tires, I suggest that he wear them out as little as possible.

Q Mr. President, you referred to four tires. Does that mean people who have five might not have five very long?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I am sure about four.

Q Mr. President, this Rubber Recovery Corporation, is that just a new ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. It's just a new agency, under Secretary of Commerce.

Q Mr. President, that starting time, is it 12.01 A.M., Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The minute after Midnight, Sunday night.

Q Mr. President, returning to the Rubber Recovery Corporation, will that be set up in time to reimburse the small oil dealers for the money that he puts out?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, I don't want to set up an enormous Government machinery for sending checks to everybody who brings in a little rubber.

Q My point was it would be done immediately?

THE PRESIDENT: The little fellow -- the gasoline station will pay him, and we will pay the gasoline station.

Q At the same rate, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q At the same rate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. And the oil companies are donating all of those services free.

Q Mr. President, as a result of your talks with various Democrats from New York lately, do you anticipate that there will be any fight for the nomination for Governor?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no news on that whatsoever.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) I have endorsed nobody.

Q Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have endorsed nobody.

Q Well, after Mr. (James) Farley was here, it was said that you had no objections to Bennett (Attorney General John J. Bennett, Jr.), and it was said pretty generally.

THE PRESIDENT: I have endorsed nobody, and I will have to stand on that.

Q I didn't hear?

THE PRESIDENT: Endorse nobody.

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Q Mr. President, do you think the Navy Department set a good example for other Government agencies in its action last week, I believe, in eliminating a lot of red tape and paper work, and particularly in promising promotion to those civil executives -- civilian executives who decrease rather than increase ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, and I think -- I think that the Director of the Budget is putting that -- something similar in effect in all the Departments -- a check up on paper work, because as you know the Government ought to check up on paper work about every two or three years, peace or war, and it is done from time to time.

Q On that New York governorship ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The what?

Q On that New York governorship, do you intend to endorse somebody from another ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think I have anything further on that at this time.

Q What about your Congressman, Mr. President?

Q About what?

Q What about your Congressman?

THE PRESIDENT: Well -- well -- might be some news some day. Might be something on it some day, from Dutchess County, and Orange County, or Putnam County. Not from here, probably. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you plan to sign the bill to make tomorrow MacArthur Day?

THE PRESIDENT: It's all signed. I signed it yesterday.

Q It was signed yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Anything you care to say about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. It speaks for itself -- approved by the President.

Q Would you care to say anything about the general practice of setting aside a day to honor a living hero?

Q (interjecting softly) Let's go. Let's go.

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. It went through duly transmitted with my full approval, and that's all there is. I think it is a good thing occasionally to recognize a living hero. I think it's rather a nice thing. About 15 of them are coming in tomorrow morning to see me. I would hate to wait until they were "daid." (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (turning to the front row newspapermen) How about this?

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

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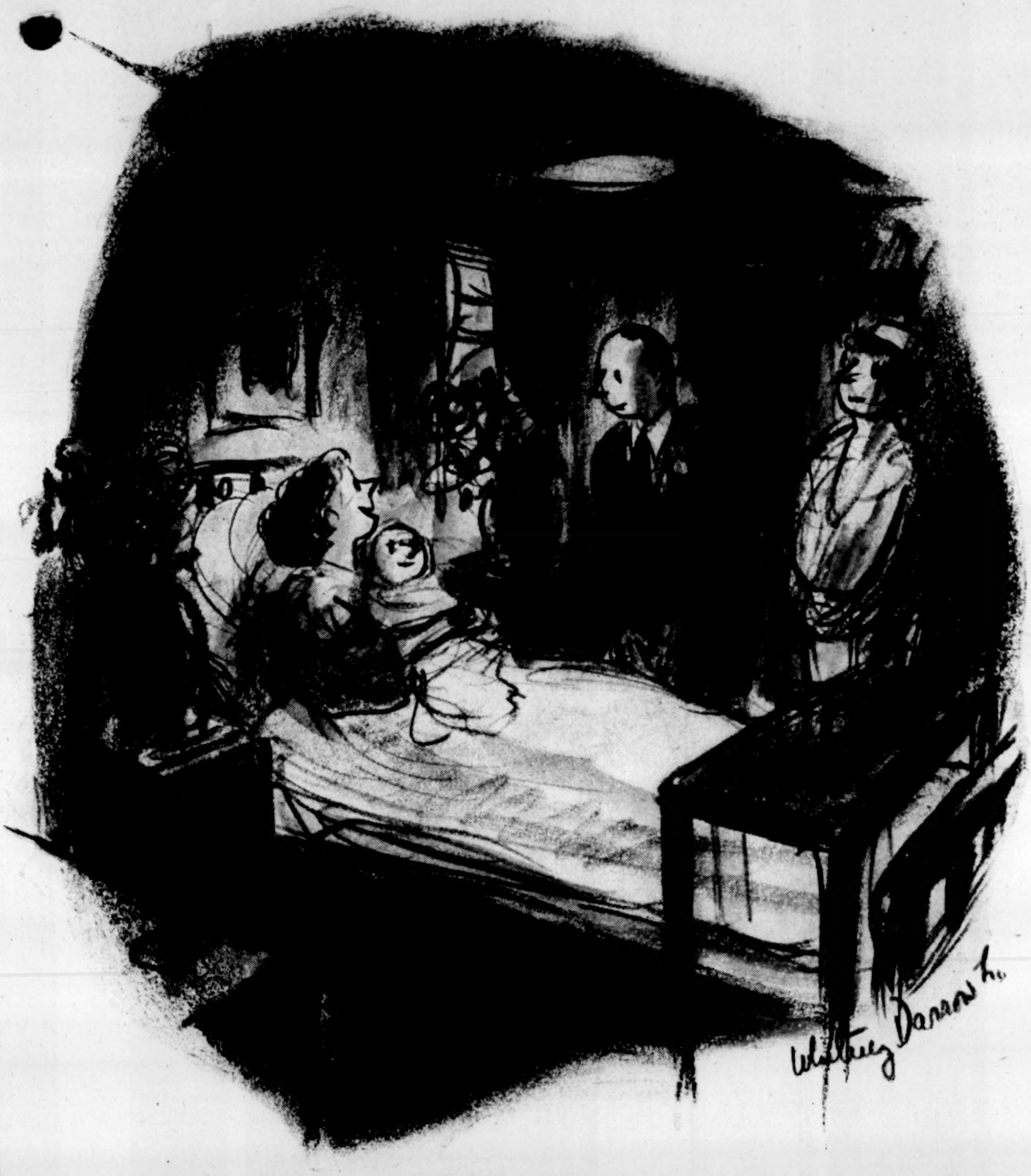
Whitney Darrow Jr.

"No, no, darling! First get his ration card,
then enter him at Groton."

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #833
Executive Office of the President
June 16, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

CAPTAIN McCREA: Mr. President, while you are on the subject of rubber. (handing the President a penciled memorandum: "A naval officer told me today that he was turning in the rubber mat on the floor of his car. He thinks these mats a fine source of supply.")

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. EARLY: Boss, stills were made of Fala yesterday. They are making newsreels today.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't give anybody any rights to do regular movies.

MR. EARLY: No. I am protecting that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, as long as it's straight daily newspaper news. What's the matter?

MR. EARLY: The movies have been after it for some time, and I have referred them to the author of the book to get the rights.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right.

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. (for the newspapermen to come in)

MR. GODWIN: See what Clifford Berryman has got on rubber? Did you see Cliff Berryman's suggestion about the rubber -- rubber stamp? (handing to the President The Evening Star for June 16, showing a cartoon of Senator Barkley and Speaker Rayburn bringing in a large basketful of rubber stamps, and saying: Mr. President, we won't need these rubber stamps any more. They're all worn out. The President replies: Thanks, boys. If you find you do need more, we'll find a way.)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. All right.

MISS MAY CRAIG: (who had noticed two pictures missing from the wall on the President's right) Where are the pictures going?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Pictures. The pictures.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. They took them down. I hadn't noticed it. That (pointing to his left on the wall) I sent up to Hyde Park. But those -- those, somebody stole them. (laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: You have been robbed.

THE PRESIDENT: They weren't rubber. I don't know what ---

MISS MAY CRAIG: (interposing) You have been robbed.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve, will you find out who stole my pictures from the wall? (laughter)

MR. EARLY: From the condition of the wall it looks like they might have been removed for cleaning purposes.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q (aside) What about rubber checks?

Q (to Mr. Early) What's that on his desk -- something of rubber?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news, except that the rubber campaign got off to a big start yesterday. Miss Diana Hopkins turned in a basket full of rubber toys, and this afternoon Fala turned in two rubber bones. (laughter) And I have been getting things. I have got a doll's hot-water bottle here that a lady sent me from Rocky Mount, North Carolina. And one of my ingenius naval officers is going around collecting rubber mats out of people's cars. Getting on pretty well, chiefly with real ingenuity.

I don't think there is any news.

Q Mr. President, there has been a suggestion that everybody give their rubber mats from the bottom of the car, and from the rear compartment. Estimates go up into the many thousands of tons. What do you think of that, sir -- suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: Grand.

Q Grand, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think if I can ride in a car without a rubber mat in it, I guess everybody else can.

Q It won't pass the District regulations.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I had a torn rubber one this time, and they said buy a new one because it's worn.

THE PRESIDENT: Who made you?

Q The District Inspection that we have to go through.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask Mr. Young about that.

Q Yes. I asked Russ about that. I have, several times. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, Congress today finished the legislative process on this bill that permits you to reclassify or allow reclassification of married men -- almost an automatic deferment, and I wondered if you were going to bring that into effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. Approved by the War Department?

Q This is known as the Allotment and Allowance bill. It says the President is also authorized to provide for the deferment of any or all categories of those men who have wives or children, or wives and children with whom they maintain a bona fide family relationship in their homes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- wasn't that on executive authority beforehand? I don't know.

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't it?

Q The conference report was just adopted on it today.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it yet.

MR. GODWIN: The Draft can defer them ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I thought ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- They can defer them. This puts it into a little clearer shape.

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh. Uh huh. That's what I thought.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conference (today) with Mr. (Oliver) Lyttelton and Mr. (Harry) Hopkins?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we talked about a whole lot of production matters -- working out very well.

Q Have you received yet, sir, the figures which you thought you might be able to give us which would hurt rather than help the enemy?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. There is quite -- quite a divergence of opinion, from the military angle, as to what should be or what should not be given out.

Q That is the reason, sir, that we appealed to the Commander in Chief. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Well, they are working on it.

Q Mr. President, there are a lot of unanswered questions about this War Information (Executive) Order. One of them involves our friend Lowell Mellett (who was present). Is he going to be anonymous, or does he remain conspicuous?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't imagine his being anonymous, can you?

Q Can you clarify specifically, sir, the status of Lowell, and Mr. (Archibald)

MacLeish?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask Mr. (Elmer) Davis.

It has been suggested, you know, by a few people who always try to pick flaws, that if only we let Mr. Davis operate, things will be all right, but the whole thing would fall down if he was subjected to Presidential interference. Well, I think you had better let Mr. Davis operate.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, in that Order you mention the Psychological Warfare Joint Board.

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The Psychological Warfare Joint Board. That's the first time I have seen that in print.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how it got in. It must be hush-hush. (laughter)

Q Who is on that?

Q No cooperation with the Censor, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I guess that's another anonymous one.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference today with Messrs. (Luigi) Antonini and (Alex) Rose? (American Labor Party representatives)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there is any more to be said on it. There really isn't any news at this time of the year. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about your conference (today) with the Secretary of the Treasury?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's another -- another Bond issue.

Q Nothing to do with the sales tax, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Could you give any details as to that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: They have got to announce that. I think it is going to be announced this afternoon or tomorrow morning. We are all set to go.

Q Mr. President, now that the House Committee has virtually killed the 25 thousand dollar income limitation provision, would you rather have a sales tax than suffer a 2 billion dollar lag in revenue?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, the process of a -- of a tax bill is very long. It started about the first of December, 1941, and they are all in the middle of it. And when it gets to the Committee it has to go out on the Floor. And then when it gets through the House, it has to go over to the Senate. And then they have to have some more hearings, and it goes through the Senate in a different form, in many different ways. And then it will go to conference. And eventually -- I hope this year -- (laughter) -- it will reach me. But I don't think it's time for me to express an opinion on it at all at this time.

Q Mr. President, would you care to say whether or not you think, so far, the tax part of your anti-inflation program is running along according to schedule, as you would like to have it?

THE PRESIDENT: I am perfectly willing to say that it is slightly behind schedule.

Q Could you say anything about the additional points in the anti-inflation program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there is anything to say.

Of course I think it is perfectly fair, and I hope the Committee won't -- won't -- on Ways and Means, won't take it amiss -- a good portion of this bill, you know, is going into effect the day it is signed, and every day that goes by means a loss of a great deal of money to the Federal treasury. That is just -- not by way of criticism, but as a mere statement of fact.

Q Are you speaking of the excise tax?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In that connection, sir, it has been reported on the Hill that you may have suggested to your Legislative Leaders the possibility of splitting the bill ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of what?

Q (continuing) --- Of dividing the bill, enacting immediately the excise tax?

THE PRESIDENT: I did that the early part of this year, just as a mere effort to get a portion into effect as a Statute, and begin to get some more money in.

Q (interposing) Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nothing new in that, but ---

Q (interposing) Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: It is still my view: that I want to get some money into the Treasury as soon as possible by one way or another. I am not trying to dictate the method.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you may have noticed that (Lieut.) General (Henry H.) Arnold of the Air Corps issued -- publicized a letter, or it was publicized for him -- a letter congratulating an airplane manufacturer, which brought out an action at sea. A little later the Navy had a communication which had to do with certain actions at sea, and had no reference to the Arnold action. I understand that the General has written -- written a letter, or sent another telegram to another airplane manufacturer today along the same line, and I wondered if anything is going on between the Army and Navy, or is there anything that we might know about?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you off the record, that after I read the paper this morning I asked the same question. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes? You have found out, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I asked them to look into it though.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about American operations in the Middle East, that question being prompted by these planes coming down in Turkey?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think that is a really very vital military secret.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

(Notebook IX-PC -- page 65 -- JR)